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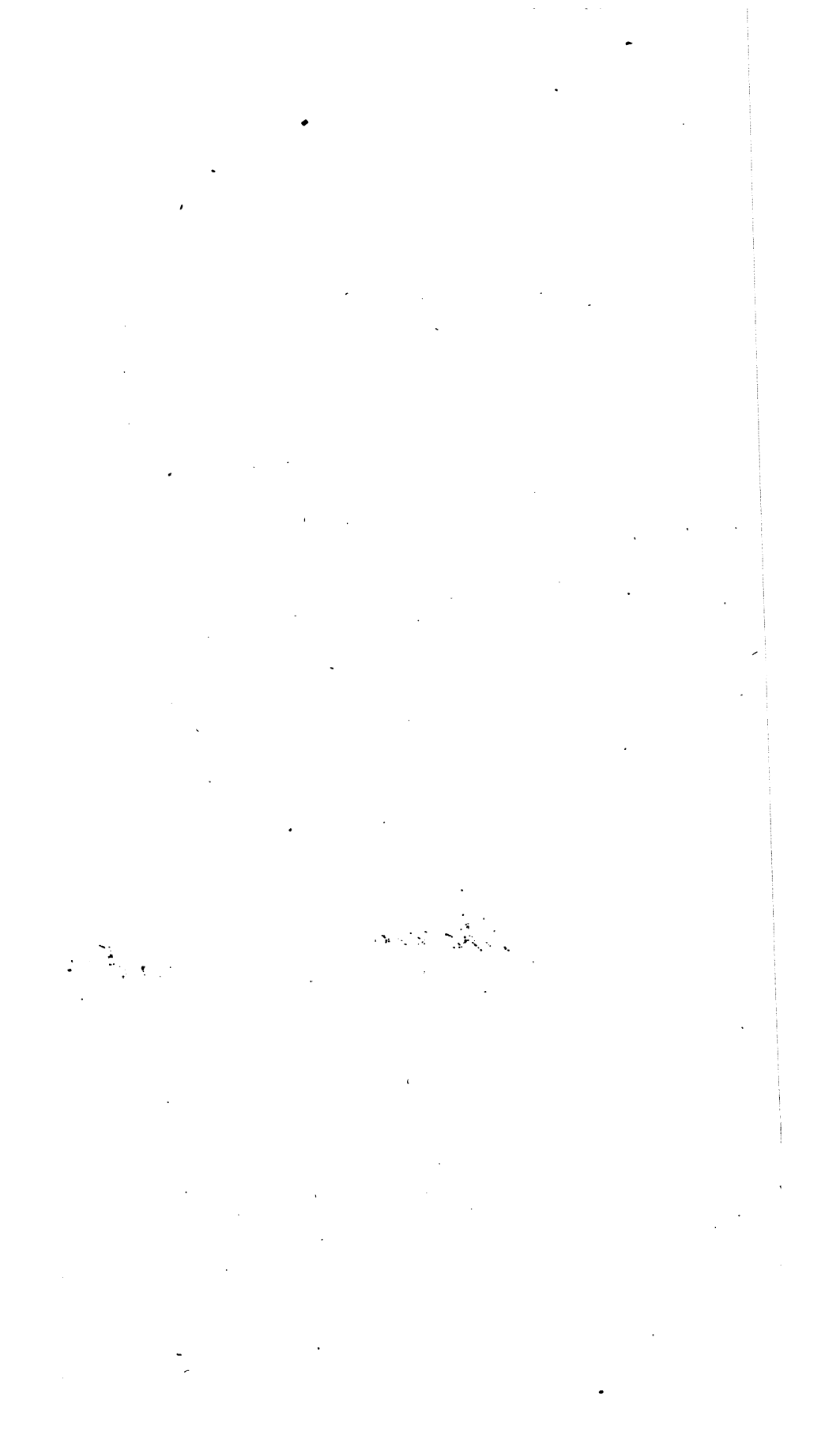
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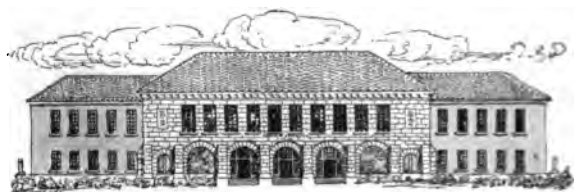
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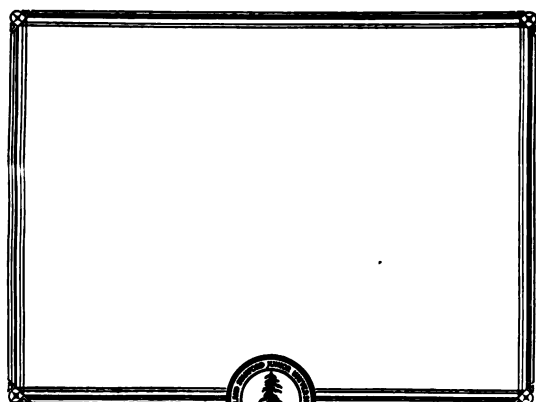
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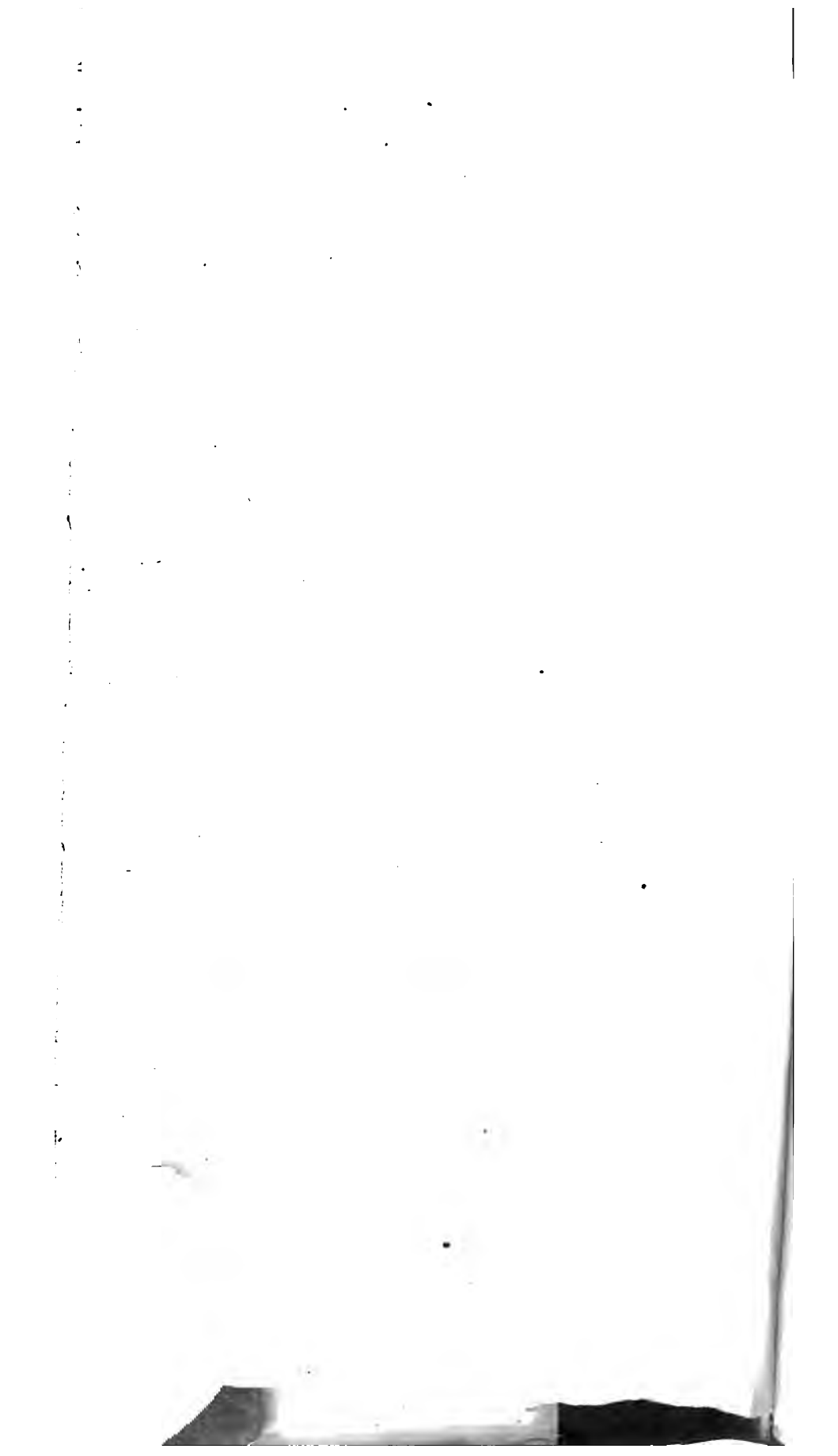


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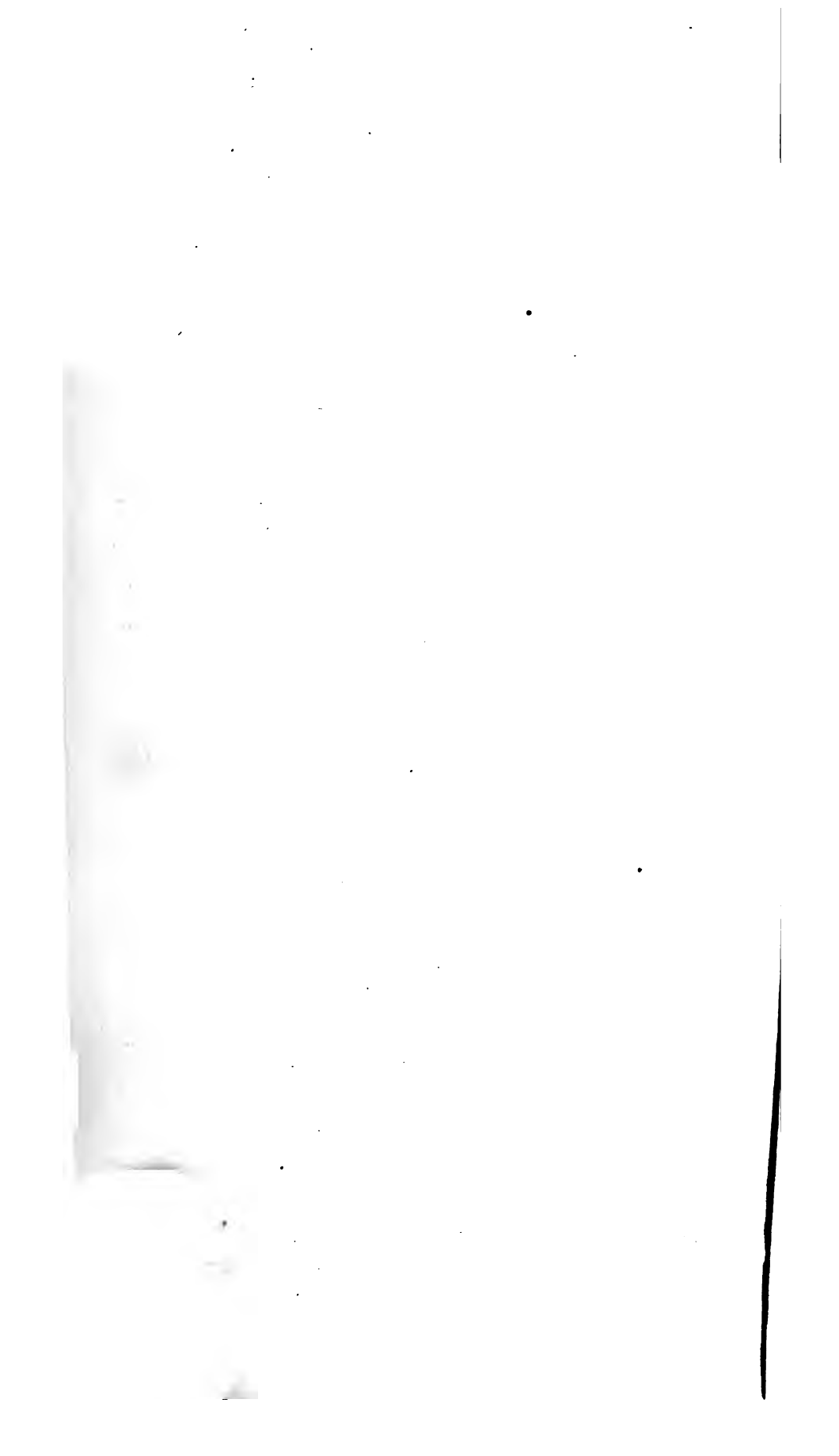
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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION,  
IN BOSTON, AUGUST, 1831.

TO WHICH IS ADDED  
AN ESSAY  
ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL-HOUSES,  
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## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS.

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[The following account of the last meeting of the Institute, we copy entire from the Secretary's Record. There are some items which, if we regard merely their intrinsic importance, might have been safely omitted. We have thought, however, that it would be agreeable to the members of the Institute, to possess a full copy of the Record, and we accordingly publish it entire. CENSORS.]

### REPRESENTATIVES' HALL, *Aug. 25.*

THE Institute was called to order by the President at twenty minutes past 9.

The annual Report of the Directors was read and accepted.

Communications were received from Prof. FISKE, of Amherst, and Prof. SILLIMAN, of New Haven, Ct., stating that they should be prevented from giving the lectures before the Institute, to which they had been appointed.

An interesting communication was also received from ANDREW YATES, of Chittenango, N. Y., enclosing twenty dollars, and expressing regret at unavoidable absence from the meeting of the Institute.

The act of the Legislature, incorporating the American Institute of Instruction, was read and accepted.

On motion of Mr. BAILEY,

*Voted*, That the Constitution of the Institute, adopted Aug. 21, 1830, be the Constitution of the American Institute of Instruction in its corporate capacity.

The following gentlemen were appointed a Committee of Nomination, to select a suitable list of officers for the year ensuing, with instructions to report to-morrow, at 8 o'clock, A. M. viz. REUBEN HAINES, of Germantown, Pa.; JAMES G. CARTER, of Lancaster, Mass.; EBENEZER BAILEY, of Boston; ELIPHA

WHITE, of S. C. ; J. KINGSBURY, of Providence, R. I.; GOOLD BROWN, of N. Y., and WILLIAM C. WOODBRIDGE, of Ct.

At a quarter before 12, adjourned, to hear the Annual Introductory Address, from Rev. JAMES WALKER, of Charlestown. The next meeting to be held at the Atheneum Lecture-room, this evening, at 8 o'clock.

*Friday, Aug. 26.*—The hall at the Atheneum could not be procured; and there was, consequently, no meeting of the Institute last evening.

This morning, came to order between 8 and 9 o'clock.

The Committee of Nomination made a report, which was accepted; and 12 o'clock assigned for coming to a choice of officers.

Mr. E. BAILEY was appointed to procure ballots, for the use of the members.

At 9 o'clock, adjourned—to meet immediately after the second lecture this morning.

At 25 minutes past 9, a lecture was given by Mr. DURGIN, on Natural History, as a branch of early education.

At 11, a lecture by Dr. J. JACKSON, on Physical Education.

At a few minutes after 12, came to order, and proceeded to the choice of officers.

Messrs. BAILEY, of Boston,  
CARTER, of Lancaster, and  
GREENLEAF, of Bradford, Ms.

were appointed a Committee to receive, sort and count the votes. The entire list reported by the Committee was sustained. [See list of officers at the end of the volume.]

The following question, proposed by Mr. WOODBRIDGE, was then discussed; Mr. WOODBRIDGE opening the debate in the affirmative.

“Ought *Athletic Games*, combining exercise with amusement, to be united with *Manual Labor* in the education of youth, as a means of forming and invigorating the body?”

After which the Institute adjourned, to meet at Chauncy Hall, at 7 o'clock in the evening, and resume the discussion.

At half past 3, GOOLD BROWN, of New York, gave a lecture on the Theory of, and best mode of teaching, English Grammar.

At 5 o'clock, Prof. FOWLER, of Middlebury College, gave

a lecture, on the Influence of High Schools and Academies on Common Schools.

*Chauncy Hall, Friday evening, Aug. 26.*—The discussion of Mr. WOODBRIDGE's question was continued with much animation; and six or seven gentlemen took part in the debate. It was, however, determined, that questions thus discussed should not be decided by vote of the Institute, but that the discussion should be closed at the discretion of the meeting.

The following was then presented by a member, and adopted for debate :—

"An allusion was made in Mr. FOWLER's lecture to the Orthography of Johnson: What standard in Orthography and Pronunciation ought the teachers of the United States to adopt?" The present consideration of this question was waived by the mover, and Mr. BAILEY proposed the following :—  
"Ought Natural History to be taught in common schools?" This question was accepted, and after some remarks from Mr. FISHER, of Pennsylvania, the Institute adjourned till to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock.

*Saturday, Aug. 27.* Came to order at a little before 9: soon adjourned to half past 12, to hear the report of the Committee on the Essays (presented for premium) upon the best construction of School-houses.

At 9, J. L. PARKHURST, of Gilmanton, N. H. gave a lecture on the best means of exciting the student to exertion, without the aid of emulation.

At 11, J. HAYWARD, of Cambridge, gave a lecture on the Discipline and Management of Schools.

At 12, the Institute came to order, and heard the report of the Committee on Prize Essays, to which were appended two resolutions,—all of which were accepted.

On motion of Mr. CARTER,

The following gentlemen were appointed a committee to cause to be printed, as soon as convenient, a sufficient number of copies of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Institute, together with a list of the officers of the present year,—viz. MESSRS. CARTER, BAILEY, and THAYER.

On motion of Mr. BAILEY,

Messrs. ABBOTT, of Boston, RYDER, of Dorchester, and GREENLEAF, of Bradford, were appointed a committee to consider and report upon the expediency of making life members of the Institute, those gentlemen who delivered lectures before the Association last year, and furnished copies for publication.

*Voted*, That the following question be adopted for discussion by the Institute.

“What is the best practical method of teaching English Grammar?”

On motion of Mr. G. F. THAYER,

*Voted*, That the Institute meet daily at 8½ o'clock, A. M. and proceed immediately to business.

*Voted*, That the Institute meet on Monday and Tuesday evening next, at half past 7 o'clock.

The committee on Mr. BAILEY's proposition to make the Lecturers of last year *life members*, presented a report unfavorable to the measure, which report,

On motion of G. F. THAYER, was accepted by the Institute.

A communication from FREDERICK EMERSON, stating that it would not be in his power to deliver a lecture on Arithmetic, as announced, was read.

Information was also given by the Corresponding Secretary, Mr. MILES—that circumstances would prevent Dr. BARBER, of Pennsylvania, from giving his lecture on Elocution.

Adjourned till the close of the regular exercises of this afternoon.

At half past 3, Mr. J. ABBOTT, of Boston, delivered a lecture on Moral Education.

At 5, the Prize Essay on the best mode of constructing School-houses—written by WILLIAM A. ALCOTT, of Hartford—was read; likewise, as a useful appendage, a very valuable and interesting communication, on the size of School-rooms, by WILLIAM C. WOODBRIDGE, of Hartford, Ct.

At 6, the Institute was called to order by the Senior Vice President present—REUBEN HAINES—and, after a short discussion, it was voted to meet at Chauncy Hall, this evening at half past 7, to discuss the question, “Ought the Bible to be studied as a branch of popular education?”

A communication was this day received from WILLIAM C. WOODBRIDGE, offering the pages of the *Annals of Education* for the use of the Institute, to publish any of its documents, &c.—which was read and placed on file.

At half past 6 o'clock adjourned.

CHAUNCY HALL, *Saturday Evening, Aug. 27.*

The Institute met agreeably to adjournment,

S. C. PHILLIPS in the chair.

Question for discussion—"Ought the Bible to be studied as a branch of popular education?"

Which was debated till about 10 o'clock, when the Institute adjourned till Monday morning.

G. F. THAYER, *Rec. Sec'y.*

REPRESENTATIVES' HALL, *Monday, Aug. 29.*

Institute came to order at half past 8 o'clock.

*Voted*, That JACOB ABBOTT and CLEMENT DURGIN be a committee to report for the public papers the doings of the Institute, from day to day, and to give notice of the order of exercises for the coming day.

The question "What standard of Orthography and Pronunciation ought the teachers of the United States to adopt?" was taken up for consideration. After a few observations from several members, the discussion was suspended, and the following Resolutions, submitted by Mr. WOODBRIDGE, were adopted.

*Resolved*, That it be considered the duty of every member of the Institute, as his circumstances permit, to communicate the results of his experience and observations on the subjects discussed or proposed by the Institute, to the Censors, to be by them published, or referred to appropriate committees, at their discretion.

*Resolved*, That on Tuesday evening (to-morrow) the members of the Institute be called on to communicate orally, any facts or experiments connected with the subjects of the lectures of the last year.

Adjourned, to meet immediately after the second lecture this morning.

At 10 minutes past 9, Mr. O. SHAW, of Richmond, Va., gave a lecture on Arithmetic, in connexion with an exhibition and explanation of his Visible Numerator. This lecture was in lieu of one from Mr. F. EMERSON—and was prepared, at very short notice, at the request of the committee of arrangements.

At 11, Mr. S. C. PHILLIPS, of Salem, gave a lecture on "the Usefulness of Lyceums, considered in connexion with the influence of the country and age in which we live, upon the condition of man as an *individual*, a *member of society*, a *political agent*, and an *intellectual and moral being*."

At the close of this lecture, the Institute came to order, and it was *Voted*, That the Secretary be requested to give notice, that the Ladies are invited to be present at the business meetings of the Institute, should they desire it.

*Voted*, That Mr. ABBOTT be excused, at his own request, from the duty of reporting the doings of the Institute, and that Mr. WOODBRIDGE be substituted in his place.

Adjourned till after the second lecture this afternoon.

At half past 3, W. H. BROOKS, of Salem, gave a lecture on the education of the Five Senses.

At 5, Dr. J. D. FISHER, of Boston, gave a lecture on the education of the Blind.

*Monday, P. M. 6 o'clock.*

The Institute again came to order for business, when it was —*Voted*, That a communication relative to the Peace Society, presented by THOMAS THOMSON, jun. be submitted to the consideration of a committee to decide whether or not it should be read to the Institute. The following gentlemen were appointed, viz. Messrs. CARTER, WELDON, and OLIVER.

A communication from Mr. A. RAND, offering the use of his paper—the education Reporter—for the publications of the Institute, was read, and placed on file.

Adjourned at a quarter before 7.

CHAUNCY HALL, *Monday Evening, Aug. 29.*

The Institute met for debate. Question, "Ought the Bible to be studied as a branch of common education?"



This question was discussed with great interest and spirit until a late hour, when the Institute adjourned to tomorrow morning, at half past 8 o'clock.

G. F. THAYER, *Rec. Sec'y.*

REPRESENTATIVES' HALL, *Tuesday, Aug. 30, 1831.*

Institute came to order a few minutes before 9: the Board of Directors being in session till that time, prevented an earlier assembling.

The committee on Mr. THOMSON's communication, reported unfavorably to the reading of said paper before the Institute, and their report was accepted.

Adjourned till the close of the second lecture this morning.

At 9 o'clock, a lecture was delivered by GEORGE B. EMERSON, of Boston, on Female Education.

At 11, a lecture was delivered by JAMES G. CARTER, of Lancaster, on the necessity and the most practicable means of raising the qualifications of Teachers of common schools. [This lecture was in lieu of the "Analysis of the powers of the mind which are to be developed in the process of education," which had been announced, but which it was found impracticable to prepare.]

Institute came to order for business, at a quarter past 12.

The following votes, passed yesterday in the Board of Directors, were read to the Institute:—

1. Voted, *That the several members of the Institute be respectfully invited to communicate such facts relating to education, and such practical method of teaching in any particular department, as may not be generally known or practised: such communications to be directed to the Recording Secretary, before the first day of August, 1832, and by him to be submitted to the Directors.*

2. Voted, *That the members of the Institute be requested to offer, through the Secretary, any suggestions, relating either to subjects, lectures, or any other matter, which, in their opinion, may tend to render the exercises of the next anniversary interesting and useful.*

*Half past 3, P. M. August 30.*

Institute came to order for the discussion of one or more of the following subjects, which had been previously adopted; viz.

1. The use of emulation in schools.
2. The cultivation of the voice.
3. The introduction of natural history into schools.
4. The orthography of the English language.
5. The construction of school-houses.

The *second* subject was taken up in the following form:—"Is sufficient attention given in our schools to the improvement of the *voice*? If not, what are the means to be employed to secure its greatest desirable perfection?"

After a few observations from several gentlemen, the further consideration of the subject was indefinitely postponed.

The report in part of the Committee on the State of Education, was read, agreeably to a vote of the directors, by whom said committee was appointed. After which, the subject of emulation, in the following phraseology, was taken up and discussed, with much spirit, for the remainder of the afternoon:

"Ought emulation to be resorted to in schools, as a means of stimulating the student to exertion?"

At half past 6, adjourned.

CHAUNCY HALL, *Tuesday Evening, half past 7.*

Institute met agreeably to adjournment, and continued the discussion of the subject of the afternoon, with great interest and animation, until a quarter past 10, when the meeting was dissolved.

G. F. THAYER, *Rec. Sec'y.*

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**INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.**

**BY**

**JAMES WALKER.**

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## INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

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EDUCATION, understood in its largest sense, comprehends all those influences by which the mind is enlightened, and the character formed. A larger proportion of these influences than is commonly supposed, are in their nature contingent or accidental; and are not, therefore, and cannot be included in any plan or system. For this reason I have thought it would be well, gentlemen, to introduce the present course of lectures on regular and systematic education by a few remarks on what may be denominated contingent or accidental education.

I am aware that of late years, a passion for system and artificial arrangements in education has been carried very far; the pupil being made not only to study, but to exercise and play, and eat and drink, and even to sleep by rule, and as much as possible under the eye of his instructors. Adopt any one of these plans, however, and refine upon it as much as you please, and make it extend as far as you can over the time, and motion, and even the thoughts of the child, and still the child will be constantly liable to impressions from accidental causes. Nay more; the impressions thus received from accidental causes, against which you did not, and could not guard, always may and sometimes will determine what is afterwards to distinguish his mind and fortunes. There is no calculating the effect of the slightest as well as most casual circumstances on the opening and susceptible mind, balancing, perhaps, at

that very moment, on some eventful question, and wanting but the weight of a single feather to incline it one way or the other. A word overheard by accident in the streets, the disappointment occasioned by a stormy day, a common story book read in a particular frame of mind, a fit of sickness, the sudden death of a schoolmate, even a remarkable dream—these are occurrences not to be excluded by the modern refinements in education; and yet any one of them is sometimes sufficient forever to fix, or entirely to reverse, a child's genius and prospects.

For obvious reasons the thoughts which are suggested accidentally, and pursued by the child voluntarily, crude and visionary as they will oftentimes be, are yet more likely to affect and determine the character than those taught in the regular exercises. Accidental suggestions not only increase the child's stock of thought, but what is of vastly greater importance, they set him a-thinking; and besides, the thoughts which he receives in this way, are his own, and not another's. It is true we can make the thoughts of other men our own by adopting them and acting on them; but a child will be slow to do this in regard to those lessons he is set to learn as a task, partly because he does learn them as a task, which will be likely to connect them with disagreeable associations, and make their recurrence unwelcome, and partly because when the lessons are recited, he will be apt to suppose the task done and think no more about them. Persons engaged in the business of instruction cannot be reminded too often, that "no complex or very important truth was ever yet transferred in full developement from one mind to another. Truth of this kind is not a piece of furniture to be shifted; it is a seed which must be sown and pass through the several stages of growth." Now as in the vegetable world, of the multitude of seeds, with which nature in her profusion strews the earth, not more perhaps than one in ten thousand strikes root; so of the multitude of thoughts suggested or communicated to the child, not more perhaps that one in ten thousand strikes root. Those, however, are

most likely to do so, to which the mind takes spontaneously. Hence it often happens that children at school are more affected in their intellectual as well as moral character, by the society of the place, the personal qualities of their teachers, their conversation with one another, and their own reflections on passing events, than by any thing taught them in formal lectures, or in the books given them to study, or by anything in the peculiar system of discipline or instruction.

This should lead us to put less confidence than most theorists are inclined to do in mere plans and systems of education, however recommended. Of course I do not mean to deny that many important improvements and facilities have been introduced of late years, applicable alike to all systems ; such, for example, as respect the construction of schoolrooms, the use of apparatus, and the character and use of manuals. Neither am I disposed to call in question the actual efficiency of the systems most in vogue at the present day, if with Pestalozzi's system, for example, we can have a Pestalozzi, if with the Lancasterian system we can have a Lancaster, if with Jacotot's system we can have a Jacotot. I believe in the accounts of extraordinary proficiency made under all these different systems ; which prove, as it seems to me, that one system is about as good as another, and that the extraordinary proficiency in the cases mentioned is to be ascribed not to the system, but to the personal qualities of the teacher, and the excitements of a new experiment, or, in other words, to accidental causes.

We must not depend, at least not exclusively, or chiefly, on systematic instruction of any kind for the proper and full developement of the understanding and conscience. Many parents appear to think, that if they spare no expense in the education of their children, if they place them at the schools in highest repute and which are patronised by the best families, if they provide for them the best books and the best instructors, and put them under the newest and best systems of instruction, they have done all which, as parents, they are bound to do, or can do.



They forget how much depends on their own example, and on other domestic influences, going back as far as the personal character of the nurse, and the tales of the nursery ; by which the future tastes and dispositions of their children are not unfrequently determined, before they are sent to school. Besides, if it were not so, they are not warranted in looking on certain processes in education as a kind of machinery by which characters can be moulded to order ; or in thinking that mind in the hands of the schoolmaster is as marble in the hands of the statuary. They must not forget the original differences in children, and that the human mind from the beginning is essentially free, and that many of its operations, and many of the influences by which it is swayed, are in their own nature hidden, inextricable, contingent. Or, even if they take the ground that character is the creature of circumstances merely, and that it is formed for man and not by him, still as we know but a small part of these circumstances, and have control over but a small part of those which we do know, we can but guess at the final result of our endeavours in particular instances. And experience teaches us that children, especially in the early stages of their moral and intellectual culture, are liable at every step of their progress to extraneous and malign influences, which may traverse and defeat the best laid plans.

Here, as it seems to me, we detect one of the principal causes of the frequent and melancholy failures in education. A merchant, for example, who, beginning with barely learning enough to write his name, has gained wealth and rank, expends a fortune on the training of an only son, in the hope of making that distinction certain in regard to him, which in regard to himself he is willing to attribute, in part at least, to lucky coincidences. This son, however, after being made to pass through the customary forms and processes of what is called an accomplished education, comes out at last an incorrigible profligate and dunce. The father, in the bitterness of his disappointment, rails at schoolmasters, and schools, and systems of instruction, as if they alone had been in fault. If

he would look deeper, and be just, he would find that if he rails at any thing, he ought to rail at prevalent abuses nearer home, or at the general state of society, or at other extraneous and malign influences, for which neither schoolmasters, nor schools, nor systems of instruction are responsible. The common prejudice that our public schools and colleges are places where the virtue of lads and young men are in much greater danger than in other situations, is, as it seems to me, without foundation. So far as my observation extends, I do know, that, as a general rule, those children out of the same family who have been educated at the university, have become more distinguished for their sense of character, and their enterprize, than those who have been otherwise employed. Even when through the influence of wealth, or other temptations, all have become dissipated and licentious, the former have not commonly sunk so low, nor become so gross. I am fully convinced, that the standard of morals and industry in most of our public seminaries is as high, nay, higher than in the community generally, and about as much higher as in the nature of things we can expect it to be.

Admitting, however, that, as things are, failures in education are generally attributable to extraneous and malign influences, an important question arises, whether it is not possible to do much more than has yet been done or attempted, to correct or shut out these influences.

No plan for excluding these influences by founding a school, in which the students shall be interdicted all intercourse with the world on rigid monastic principles, would be practicable in this country; nor desirable if practicable. Theorists have sometimes contended that much must be gained by allowing the mind to attain strength and maturity, before it is put to its first trials. This, however, as it seems to me, would be to counteract one of the wisest arrangements of nature, according to which every individual is exposed to temptation gradually, and to one temptation after another, as his susceptibility to it is developed, and is not thrust on a multitude of new tempta-

tions at once. Others, again, have argued that it must be a great advantage to children to have an opportunity to study their parts, as it were, in private, and to become familiar with them by frequent rehearsals, before they are called to act them in public. It will always be found, however, I suspect, that the formal lessons taught in an institution like the one to which I am now referring, and even that the experience and discipline which its inmates may derive from their own conduct, or from their intercourse with one another, in a state of society so artificial and constrained, will have hardly any influence in preparing them for real life. Besides, shut out the world as effectually as you may from your pupils, you cannot shut out a knowledge of its existence, and that they will mingle with it freely hereafter; neither can you prevent them from dreaming about what they will do and become; and they will be about as likely to be corrupted by the world as it exists in their imagination, as they would be by the world as it exists in reality.

Others, not satisfied with the world as it is, and despairing of being able to exclude its influence in education, have thought to make a world for themselves by an entire reorganization of society on scientific principles. This is Mr. Owen's plan, and it is amusing to find with what confidence he speaks of its feasibility, nothing being necessary, according to him, but to cut up a country into parallelograms, introduce a community of interests, and apply his boasted science of circumstances, and the system must work, to use his own words, "with the certainty of a mathematical procedure." For a time his establishment at New Lanark did succeed, being animated by his own indefatigable spirit and his various contrivances being recommended by the charm of novelty, christianity also being recognised, and the morals of the place being under the influence of religious sanctions and institutions. But his total failure at New Harmony seemed like the derision and scorn with which nature herself will never fail to pursue the pretended reformer, however well meaning, who thinks to interfere

with her established processes for the development of the human faculties without acknowledging the mind's essential freedom, its spiritual and immortal element, and its relationship to the divinity. M. de Fellenburg's establishment at Hofwyl is not liable to this objection, and considered as an asylum for destitute orphans, and the children of the profligate poor, for whom alone it was originally designed, it is difficult to speak in exaggerated terms of the noble charity. At the same time we must not form our judgment of the practical tendency of such institutions from their appearance on paper, nor from the manner in which they strike an occasional visiter, nor from the success of a single and a first experiment. It is obvious that almost every thing depends on the personal qualities of the superintendent, and that these again depend not a little on local and temporary excitements, which would inevitably decline should these, or similar establishments become common. It also deserves attention that the abuses in such establishments consequent upon a decay of zeal and fidelity in the superintendence, must be much more injurious and extensive than any to which schools conducted on the usual plan are liable.

On the whole, I do not believe that much is to be expected from artificial arrangements to exclude or regulate the influence of incidental or extraneous causes in education. Facts, I conceive, have put it beyond controversy that children in well ordered families are brought up with as little exposure in large cities, as in retired villages, and in the open world as in cloisters, or gardens. At any rate, I feel sure that no security or advantage to be derived from seclusion, or an artificial arrangement of circumstances, will compensate for the loss a child must incur in being torn at a tender age from the influences of a virtuous and happy home, and from the eye and care of those whom God has constituted his guardians, with affections and powers and responsibilities, which they may cast off or disregard themselves, but cannot delegate to another.

Instead of vainly attempting to exclude all extraneous influences, or dictate what these influences shall be, the great ob-

ject of education, as it seems to me, should be to fortify the mind against them, and to watch over and correct immediately the bad biasses it may from time to time receive from them. Our aim should be to form or alter the mind in respect to circumstances, and not circumstances in respect to the mind. Human nature, they tell us, is always and every where the same ; a proposition which may be true enough if understood simply to mean that man is always man, and not man to-day, and horse, or elephant, or crocodile, tomorrow. But if it is intended to insinuate that man, as man, is always, and every where the same intellectual and moral being, to be affected in precisely the same way, and in precisely the same degree, by the same circumstances, the error is so palpable and so contradictory to every day's experience, as scarcely to deserve a formal rejection. We have heard a great deal too much, of late years, from smatterers and sciolists in philosophy about the power of circumstances, as if this power did not depend solely on the susceptibilities of those on whom they operate, and as if these susceptibilities were not themselves susceptible of change by education and self discipline. It is not true that man is the creature of circumstances unless you include in these circumstances his own faculties and susceptibilities, and the state of his mind for the time being ; or, in other words, unless you include in the circumstances the man himself.

To guard, therefore, against the interference of accidental causes in the cultivation of the mind, it is necessary, in the first place, to prevent or correct any affinities in the mind itself to error or vice. A single spark is not dangerous unless it fall among combustibles. The maxim that to the pure all things are pure, should encourage no one, I am aware, to expose himself to temptation wantonly, or for any length of time, or to a series of temptations, in the belief that he can do it with impunity. Still if a single chance suggestion, a glimpse, a thought, have the effect to turn aside the mind materially from its course, it must be because it was previously more than half inclined to transgress. A child's preferences may sometimes,

however, be right, I will allow, and yet for want of the necessary firmness and constancy he may be driven this way and that by a thousand contradictory impulses. He wants power, which it is the province of education to impart ; of that education which ought ever to proceed on the incontestible principle, as I regard it, that the same God who has made us responsible for the use we can make of our powers, has made us capable of extending these powers almost at will. By faith in the capacities of his own nature, by a wise and patient self-discipline, by crushing, together or in detail, those lusts and passions which make him a slave to his senses, by cultivating a knowledge and love of every thing that is noble and praiseworthy, and above all by frequent communing with the eternal fountain of all energy, he may be, and he must be inspired with an invincible strength and resolution.

I have said, and I believe, that with the best systems of education the only security against disturbing influences from without is to be found in the mind itself ; in strong virtuous preferences, in firmness and constancy to follow out these preferences, and in the consciousness of a high vocation. This, after all, as it seems to me, is the great touchstone of character. If a child is able and willing to go through a long, painful and often discouraging course of preparation, sustained throughout by the hope of a distant and glorious reward, we may expect something from him. But if he has not acquired, and does not acquire this power, if he is only capable of occasional and desultory action, even though it be powerful action, he is marked for inferiority as certainly and irreversibly as if his Maker had stamped it on his forehead. Success, ultimate success, in whatever a man undertakes, depends almost entirely, yes, I believe I may say, almost entirely on forecast and perseverance, on that peculiar constitution and training which disposes one in the first place, to mark out for himself the course he will pursue, and then fires him with a resolution to follow it up, or die. He should be taught not to find his qualities in his circumstances, not to look in other

men's faces for his opinions and principles, but to find them in the depths of his own soul. There is much in the doctrine held by some religionists, that a noble character is to be formed from within, outward, and not from without, inward. A legitimate and paramount object in education, so far at least as character and success in life are concerned, is to make men independent of circumstances, and where this object is neglected or compromised, almost every thing, as it seems to me, is thrown up to chance. So far as human agency and foresight are concerned, the final result becomes a contingency dependent itself on a thousand other contingencies.

At the same time it is proper to observe, that the progress of civilization, and the diffusion of useful knowledge among all classes, must operate to lessen the danger to be apprehended from this cause. The wonder is sometimes expressed, that Socrates, the philosopher, could be so weak as to direct in his last moments, that a cock should be sacrificed to *Æsculapius*; and that Lord Bacon, the father, or at least the restorer of experimental science, should have lived and died in the popular belief of witchcraft and apparitions. The truth is, that on all great and stirring subjects there is a communion and sympathy between the strongest and most cultivated minds, and the mind of the mass, so that to educate a part of the community with any certainty of success on these subjects, the whole must be educated. There is, moreover, in every community a certain proportion who do well, a proportion which does not vary much from year to year, and may be regarded as an exponent of its moral condition. This proportion must be expected to pervade every seminary of learning from the university down to the infant school; and of course, the standard of education will be determined everywhere by the moral and intellectual standard in general society, and will rise with it. I may also be permitted to mention in this connection an important purpose answered by our public schools, tending to lessen the power of mere accident over the destinies of individuals. I believe that the amount and value

of the instruction actually communicated in this way, is commonly overrated ; but it is clear that enough must be imparted to every one, even in the humblest classes, to enable others to see, and himself to feel, for what he was intended by the Creator. Thus the developement of genius, the striking out of the sacred spark, is not left to depend, as it otherwise might, on casualty alone.

The views here presented do not make the duties of professed teachers less important and necessary ; though they make them more complicated and arduous. "Schoolmasters," says an old English divine, "have a negative on the welfare of the kingdom." They may be said to create a republic, and the time has come when under institutions like ours, we could no more dispense with the profession, as a distinct profession, than we could with that of the ministers of justice or religion. Neither would I be understood to deny that much benefit has accrued from the introduction of new and better systems of instruction. It is with most of these, I believe, as with systems of religion ; each one aims to recommend itself by the distinctness and prominence which it gives to a single beautiful thought or principle. It is well perhaps that new systems should be continually coming and going, and that each in its turn should find enthusiastic supporters. A teacher who believes in the marvellous virtues of his system, will sometimes derive from this circumstance alone a zeal and confidence and assiduity, which though founded in illusion must make his success almost certain.

After all, however, almost every thing depends as I have said on the personal qualities of the teacher. It is never to be forgotten that dullness and stupidity are as contagious as vice, and that genius and enthusiasm are not taught but communicated. "The schoolmaster is abroad," and the augury has been hailed every where by the friends of liberty and humanity as full of hope and promise. This hope and promise are made doubly sure, when we behold the well directed efforts which are made to elevate the profession and qualify



every member of it for his sublime vocation, the training of the immortal mind. Who can despair of the progress of correct principles and free institutions, who can despair of the prospects of the race, when we behold so many men, and so many women, of gifted minds, penetrated with a sense of the responsibilities of the office, and profoundly versed in the laws by which the forming and expanding character is affected either for good or evil, giving themselves to the work of training the rising generation to the knowledge of truth, the love of virtue and a sense of the divinity?

Gentlemen, I congratulate you on the part which you are called to take in this holy enterprise. I congratulate you on the opportunity put into your hands of rearing a monument to your useful services more imperishable than brass or marble, in the living and immortal spirits which you may be the means of delivering from the dungeon of their own ignorance, and crowning with the light and liberty of the sons of God.

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**LECTURE I.**

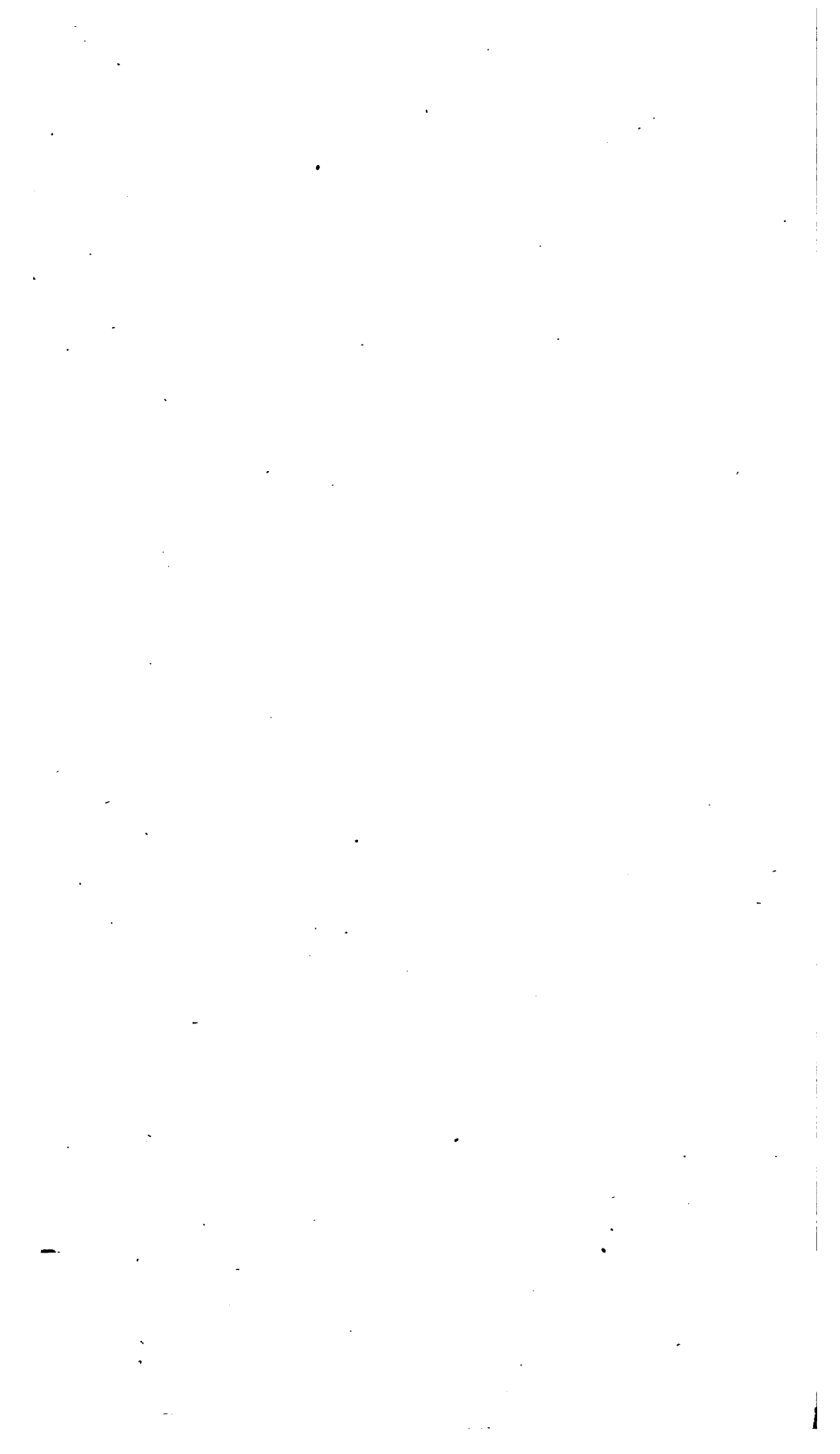
**ON**

**THE EDUCATION OF FEMALES.**

**BY**

**GEORGE B. EMERSON.**

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## EDUCATION OF FEMALES.

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THE subject of the education of females embraces, in its widest extent, whatever relates to physical, moral and intellectual education, with the exception only of what belongs to an education strictly professional. Into this broad field it is not my intention to enter, except so far as to inquire what are the subjects to which it is most important that the early attention of females should be directed, and to what extent their education should be carried.

Education is a preparation for the future ; and we shall best learn what preparation should be made, by inquiring what that future must be, what are the relations which will arise, and what duties will follow from them.

Woman, the daughter and sister, is destined to become the companion, the friend and wife. These social relations belong to her equally with man, and her interest in them is greater. Removed from the agitations of ambition and business, they constitute a larger and more important portion of her life. But she has a higher destiny ; she is to be a mother, and to form the heart, the character and the mind of her children. These are the relations which are usually taken into consideration, in regarding the life of a woman.

But independently of and previously to these relations, let us consider woman as she is in herself, as a solitary, intelligent being. It is possible that she may sustain few relations to others, that her life will be spent in complete seclusion. Shall she

therefore make no preparation for life? Because it is of little importance to others, is it of no consequence to herself? Shall she know nothing of the powers that are within, and of Him who is above and about her? Shall the earth utter no voice, and the heavens be silent to her?—Were it possible for a woman to be thus set apart from all others, she would still have sufficient reason to prefer the existence of a thinking being to a mere animal existence. But the advantages of intelligence and thought cannot be possessed any where, and still less in solitude than elsewhere, without the materials, the power and the habit of thought. The materials are as vast and various as the visible creation and the events of providence can suggest. But the elements of the natural sciences must be communicated, the susceptibility of receiving agreeable impressions from beautiful objects must be excited, and the taste must be cultivated, before the charms of external nature can be felt and comprehended, and its objects furnish fit materials for thought.

Except in a few of the most highly gifted minds, the habits of observation and of thought must be formed by the gradual process of discipline. The savage seems to derive little pleasure from the examination of the most curious object of nature, which to the cultivated *child*, would be a source of admiration and delight; and in proportion to his ignorance, each person approaches the condition of the savage.

In our country it rarely happens that any individual spends her life in this isolated state. But every female must spend a portion of her time in solitude, and by many a large portion must be thus spent. She is always not only a social being, but a contemplative one, whose mind is to be stored with high and pure thoughts, a fund for happiness and elevating meditation in those hours which are devoted to the retired and silent duties of her station. But we return to the social relations.

The first and necessary relation of woman is that of daughter. From this relation numerous duties arise, for the performance of which every woman should be educated. A daughter is the natural companion, friend and stay of her parents. A man leaves his father and mother, and marries into

the family of his wife. But in our own and other free countries, a woman, whether single or married, more frequently remains, with her earliest affections, in or near the mansion of her parents. It is to her that they naturally look for the tender attentions which will soothe them in their declining years. It is for her to temper the rough winds of adversity, and render brighter the sunshine of prosperity. She is their comforter, physician and nurse. When their voice has become tremulous and their eye dim with age, and the stores of memory have been closed, it is for her to bring forth the treasures of consolation, to make the sound of gladness still be heard in their dwelling, and to fill it with a cheerful and if she have been rightly educated, a holy light.

Do I overrate the duties of a daughter? And is it necessary to ask whether it is by a transient and superficial, or by a generous and extended education, that the heart shall be formed to feel, the mind to conceive, and the hand to execute such duties?

I need not speak particularly of the relation of sister; not that I undervalue the importance of her duties, but because I believe that the woman who is well educated for the more important ones of daughter and wife, cannot fail to be a faithful sister and friend.

We come next to the relations which arise from the institution of marriage, and in treating of them I shall speak of those duties only which belong to a mistress of a family and a mother. We have time merely to glance at the numerous duties of mistress of a family.

Enter the humblest dwelling under the prudent management of a discreet and well educated female, and observe the simplicity and good taste which pervade it. The wise mistress has nothing gaudy in her dress or furniture, for she is above the silly ambition of surpassing her neighbors in show. Her own best ornaments are cheerfulness and contentment, and those of her house are neatness, good order and cleanliness, which make a plain house and modest apartments seem better than they are. She has not the selfish vanity which would make

her strive to appear above her circumstances. She knows what are and what ought to be the expenses of her family, and she is not ashamed of her economy. It gives her the means of being liberal in her charity, and hers is a charity which reaches round the earth and embraces the poor and unfortunate every where. Her domestics, if she have any, look to her for advice in doubt, and counsel in difficulties; they respect her judgment, for she has shown herself wise and disinterested; they see that she cares for them, and they have felt her sympathy in their sorrows; in return they make her interest their own, anticipate her wishes, and show the willingness of their service by their cheerful alacrity.

She knows the virtues of pure air and the excellence of scrupulous cleanliness; she can judge of the qualities of wholesome food, and knows how easily it may be poisoned by careless or unskilful cooking. Her knowledge and care shine in the happy and healthy faces of her children. No harsh sounds are heard in her dwelling, for her gentleness communicates itself to all around her. Her husband hastens home, and whatever may have been his fortune abroad, enters his house with a cheerful step. He has experienced the pleasure of seeing kind faces brightening at his approach, and contented with what he finds at home, has no inducement to seek for happiness abroad. Nor is she satisfied with consulting the present gratification of those around her. By her example and gentle influence, she leads them onward to what is better and more enduring hereafter. Few know the noiseless and real happiness which such a woman sheds around her, as if she were the sun of her little world.

Most of the excellencies which are implied in this character may be considered prudential. They are not the less moral virtues, and they would be the natural fruit of a wise and religious education. There is no station in which they might not be cultivated, nor in which they would not promote happiness.

The highest relation which a woman can sustain is that of mother. To the mother is in a great degree committed the

formation of the physical, moral, intellectual and religious character of her child.

1. She must, in the first place, superintend the developement of the physical energies of her children. Shall this curious and complicated frame be always committed to those who know nothing of its structure? Can the frail creature be reared to health and strength and beauty by one who understands nothing of the body in its healthy state nor of the appearance and consequences of disease?—There are periods and diseases in childhood, in which, if the eye be improperly exposed to light, vision may be distorted or impaired. Unwholesome food or wholesome food in improper quantities and at unsuitable times, exposure to a current of air by day or to the open air by night, at certain seasons,—all these and a thousand other causes, which many persons learn from bitter experience in the course of life, but which few know before they have suffered from their ignorance, may and often do lead to maladies, or what are called constitutional infirmities, sufficient to poison the sweet current of life for years. How much might not be done to form the voice to proper articulation and utterance, to quicken the sight and hearing, and to give more perfect training to the senses and the limbs, at an age at which comparatively nothing is done.

2. It is in infancy and early childhood that the various propensities exhibit themselves and the moral habits are formed. Most of the virtues are partly habits and partly principles, and where the habit already exists, the principle is most easily implanted. This is not the place to make a catalogue of the virtues; it will be sufficient to make mention of a few of the most essential, of which the habit might and should be formed almost from the beginning. Respect for truth, the most vital of all principles in the human character, must be inculcated and formed as a habit, long before the full perception of right and wrong is awakened. If not formed then, the finger of God alone can form it. If a child be allowed to grow up in the habit of concealment, duplicity and falsehood, his case is



almost hopeless. The whole heart must be changed before the deep poison can be washed out. Of the like nature are frankness and obedience. Gentleness and modesty also are doubtless in a great measure habits, which can be formed only by the influence of a gentle hand. Cheerfulness, too, a habit as well as a gift, I need not say how precious to its possessor, may be gradually and imperceptibly created in early years by the constant influence of cheerful looks and voices. It would be unnecessary and superfluous to dwell on what are most obviously habits, such as neatness, the love of simple pleasures, and of order. These may be formed later, but are then apt to want the charm of naturalness.

It will easily be admitted that these habits are important. Can it be imagined that they will often grow up of themselves under the hand of a mother who is indifferent to the truth, who is wanting in gentleness, cheerfulness or modesty, who has never herself been taught the value of neatness and order, and who hates the very name of simple pleasures? Or if she have been taught to value them, will these habits ripen in herself at the very moment when she finds it her duty to form them?

3. To a mother also is committed the intellect of her child. On her, more than on any other individual, it will depend to awaken the various faculties at their right season and in just and harmonious proportion. The relation between the mind of man and the universe in which he is placed by the Creator of both, is established for wise purposes which it becomes us to inquire into and reverence. They are laws of our existence. The child opens his eyes to the light, in the midst of objects on which he is to act and which are to act on him during life, and there is enough in them to give full play to all his powers. Is it to no purpose that he is so placed, and are we at liberty to disregard these indications of his destiny? The discipline of the moral powers begins with the first dawn of perception and is never intermitted. Not a look nor a tone is without its influence. Those who have observed most attentively,

have thought that the discipline of the mental powers begins not much later. Curiosity is active, the attention is excited, the memory is exerted, before the first word can be pronounced. How soon after do eager looks and questions show that mind is already busy. Then it is that the wary care of a mother is necessary to give a right direction to the active powers, to gratify and stimulate the curiosity, to direct the attention, and to guard against false prejudices. The innumerable questions which a sensible child asks, demand an answer; his mind turns, with intense earnestness, upon the objects spread about him upon the beautiful earth. A true and reasonable answer delights the little questioner, and prompts farther inquiry. Imagination and reason spring into action; and the child rises from the real world into the ideal and possible. Then commences the great investigation of causes, the instinct of which God has implanted in the soul of his rational creature, to lead him up to the *first* cause. Answer his questions aright, gratify this instinct of reason, indulge him in this luxury of inquiry, and you make him feel the delights of rational existence; he becomes an intellectual creature. Or, on the contrary, meet his ardent gaze with a look of cold indifference or stupid ignorance, show him that you know not or care not for the subjects of his inquiries; turn him away from the bright regions of reality and thought which were opening upon him, with the pain of repulse and disappointment,—you have quenched the divine spark perhaps forever; henceforth to him a veil almost impenetrable is thrown over what is most beautiful and exciting in the physical and the moral world.

A primrose by the river's brim,  
A yellow primrose is to him,  
And it is nothing more.

No one, who has lived with an inquisitive child, will say that a small amount of knowledge and little thought are sufficient to enable you to answer, satisfactorily to yourself and to him, his innumerable questions as to the properties, uses,

and causes of all he sees. Will any one say that they are not to be answered, and that slight preparation of study and discipline need be made by the mother, to enable her to watch the first dawns of reason, to foster and train the various powers, and to supply at right times and suitably the materials for their growth?

4. But a still higher office is committed to the mother. It is for her to form the religious character of her child. It has been observed by those who have had charge of deserted orphan children, that upon one who has never felt the influence of parental care and affection, it is extremely difficult to impress an idea of the paternal character of God. A mother's love is necessary to prepare the affections, and it is on a heart subdued and softened by maternal kindness that the soft rain and gentle dew of religious instruction should distil, and the seeds of a religious character be implanted. I need not say how easily, on a heart so prepared, the idea of a kind, watchful, protecting, earthly parent may be expanded into a conception of the infinite benevolence, watchfulness and protection of a father in Heaven. The *fear* of God may be impressed afterwards. But the perfect love which casts out fear grows naturally only in the bosom of a child. Then may an idea of God be implanted which shall be associated with whatever is grand and beautiful and happy, which shall not come as a spectre, to haunt the dreams of night and sickness, but shall be an ever present spirit, guiding in the paths of truth, sustaining in weakness and temptation, and protecting from every form of evil. A child may be taught to know himself, to understand something of the spiritual nature of his soul, to examine his motives, to feel his own weakness, to guard against sin, from within and from without, to subdue his passions, to respect the superior authority of his conscience as of the image of God within him; in short, to distrust and yet reverence himself. This may be done and ought to be done. Of how little value is all the rest of education in comparison with it. It can be done only by a mother who is sensible of her spiritual na-

ture, who feels the greatness of her charge and her responsibility. It is only such a mother, who will consider the invitation to her child—come unto me early—as a command upon herself to bring him.

I have, for the sake of distinctness, considered the various duties of a mother as independent of each other. In truth they are not so. The character of a man, however compound and complicated, is one, and should be formed under the uniform, controlling influence of one mind. The manners, habits, morals, mind, are but different elements of the character, dependent on each other, and parts of one whole.

I have dwelt on the duties of a mother as among the most important which can belong to the female. Every woman should therefore be educated with reference to these duties. In our country, nearly every one is destined to have the care of the early education of her own children. To those who have none of their own, the children of the incompetent from ignorance or vice, of the extremely poor, and those who have lost their natural protectors, look for parental attention. The gentleness and patience of the female character clearly indicate the intention of Providence in this respect; and the happiness which is communicated and received in the faithful discharge of this benevolent office, while it confirms the intention, is an ample reward for the exertion.

But woman's duties extend beyond the limits of her own family, and her benevolence is not confined to the care of children. She is also a member of society. What are the duties which belong to her as such?

A common but inadequate interpretation of the law of Christian benevolence, limits it to the advancement of the permanent good of others, omitting the inferior but not less binding obligation of contributing all in our power to the immediate enjoyment and happiness of our fellow creatures. Assuming the wider and more worthy as the true exposition of the golden rule, we may infer that the social duties of an individual are two-fold, the first leading him to seek the lasting good,

the second to promote the present happiness of those by whom he is surrounded. Omitting the consideration of the former of these, and confining myself to such a view of the latter as applies peculiarly to females, I say it is the duty of every woman to use the talents God has given her, to promote the immediate happiness and enjoyment of the circle of which she is a member. Of the modes by which she may do this, I shall consider only conversation and what are called accomplishments.

The peculiar facility with which highly educated females learn to excel in the art of conversation, has often been remarked. The hilarity, ready sympathy, and desire of pleasing, which are natural to woman, are intimations not to be mistaken of her Creator's intentions. The charm of easy, various, cheerful, refined conversation is too universally felt to need to be described. Whatever of excellent or curious can occupy the mind of man may naturally be made the subject of conversation. A woman often has it in her power, without departing from the modesty which is her greatest charm, to lead conversation to the most elevated and interesting subjects. She might always have, among persons of the slightest civility, that of turning it away from whatever is impure, disagreeable or unprofitable. When gracefully and skilfully used, it might be not only the means of present gratification, but the vehicle of instruction of the most permanent and ennobling kind. Is it unreasonable to say that special preparation should be made for the acquisition and exercise of this delightful art?

The accomplishments are sometimes regarded, as the name intimates, as giving the last touch and finish, and to which almost any thing else in a female's education may be sacrificed. Sometimes, on the contrary, they are looked on as trifling and valueless, wholly unworthy of the attention of an immortal creature. Truth, as usual, lies between. They may be misused, but they also may be sources of innocent and elevating pleasure to the possessor and to others. God has bestow-

ed on woman an ear and a voice which enable her to utter sounds of exquisite music. He has constituted the air an elastic medium adapted to wafting these sounds, softened but unimpaired, to a distance, and nicely adapted to the vibrations of sonorous bodies, which he has formed, and which he has given man intelligence to shape into various instruments. Shall it be considered a perversion of the Maker's purposes, for woman to perfect herself in an innocent art, by which she can worthily praise God and gladden the heart of man?

So with drawing. The eye may be trained to a quicker perception, and the mind to a more perfect taste and comprehension of the beautiful and grand in nature, by a course of instruction. The hand may be made a fit and ready minister to record or execute the conceptions or observations of the mind. Shall an art which thus opens to its possessor new sources of gratification, and enables her to transmit to an absent friend a conception of a fine scene, and to enrich her home with the beauties of the mountains and waters of distant lands, be condemned as trivial and frivolous?

Accomplishments are too apt to be cultivated for the purpose of rendering their possessor an object of attention for a brief period; and when they have served this purpose, they are too frequently thrown aside as of no farther use. Why should it be so? When a woman has found a home possessing too many attractions to leave her the wish to wander from it, why should she not add to them permanently those of her early accomplishments? They are not less pleasing to tried friends than to transient admirers. They may be retained to cheer her own solitude, to enliven and compose the spirits of her husband and children, and to gratify her friends. And when friends shall have departed, and life is wearing away, and the senses are beginning to fail, the accomplishments of her youth may be the solace of her age.

Men meet in the social circle, to be innocently, agreeably, happily and profitably occupied: The stores of each should be contributed for the benefit of all. Each one is under a tacit obligation to do something for the common improvement, and

he who has not a treasure of wisdom from experience, observation and study, by which to enlighten, can at least produce his native talent, to entertain and delight.

I shall notice a single other social relation in which woman is placed, which brings its duties and requires provision for their fulfilment. It is that of instructor. A great part already, and it is to be hoped that a greater part hereafter, of the business of instruction in schools, must be performed by females. Every thing indicates the natural adaptation of the female character to this vocation. In the present constitution of society, it is the only profession which is open to women; for this then let ample preparation be made.

In the last place woman is immortal. She has relations to the Being above us and to the future life, of inestimable importance and endless duration. The peculiar relations of the present existence, all which constitutes a difference between the sexes, will cease in that state where they are not married nor given in marriage, but are like the angels in Heaven. Every being who comes into existence with this immortal destiny, should alike be educated for immortality. This should be continually kept in view, from the beginning, through every stage. If we are immortal, and if we are to be rewarded according to the use of our talents, if our capacities for happiness hereafter are to depend on the cultivation they receive here, of what unmeasured value is whatever tends to form the powers to greater vigor, and prepare them for their never ending action.

I have thus rapidly surveyed some of the most important relations and consequent duties which belong to the life of a female. We have now to consider what course of discipline and study is necessary to prepare for them.

In order that the mind may act vigorously in any given situation, it is necessary that it should have something to act upon, the power and habit of acting, and a medium by which to act. These are all equally indispensable. The accumulation of facts and conclusions, the acquisition of language, and the

training of the faculties, form then the three leading objects of education. In regard to these, it is unnecessary to discuss the question of priority ; they are almost inseparably connected. Whatever exercises the faculties, strengthens them, and facts and language cannot be acquired or retained without the exercise of attention, discrimination and memory ; and these and the other powers cannot be disciplined unless they be employed in the acquisition of facts and language. The objection, then, which is sometimes made to certain studies, that they serve only to acuate and strengthen the powers, is futile. There are no such studies. It is however readily admitted that some studies have this effect, more fully than others, and that some exert it in an imperfect manner.

The studies which are best suited to the mind in its earliest stages are indicated by a thousand intimations. The volume of nature, with its infinite variety, is spread out before the opening eye, every page teeming with interest, inviting and rewarding inquiry. Towards this the young heart leaps out with a native and energetic fondness, which all the perverse influences of a bad education are hardly sufficient to repress. Every object is full of beauty, every sound has an echo, in the heart of a child. Is all this to no purpose ? Shall the harmony between the world without and the unperverted affections, teach us no lesson ?

Natural History, thus distinctly pointed at, is the study best suited to the exercise of several powers of the mind, furnishing a vocabulary of the words of most constant use, and supplying a knowledge of facts which are so far essential, as they are at the foundation of all the common business of life, of several of the sciences and of most of the useful arts. In its various branches it affords room for the play of every diversity of taste. Its simplest elements are level with the meanest capacity, and can be grasped by the weakest hand. Its exhaustless abundance fills the most mature mind and taxes the strongest. Some of its departments are more peculiarly suited to the restlessness of children than others. The colours and



fragrance of flowers, the graceful shapes and motions of animals, are a natural recommendation of Botany and Zoology. The little variety in the minerals of a single district, and the extended researches necessary to find them, point out a more remote period of life for Mineralogy ; while the vastness of the views and the uncertainty of the conclusions of Geology, shows that it should be reserved for an age still more mature. These studies may be begun at home, continued at school, and perfected in after life. They may be taught by conversation or by books, in the fields or in the school-room.

When provision is made for a knowledge of the names, properties and uses of natural objects, in which all should be instructed, the mind will be prepared for examining into their composition and mutual action. Chemistry and Natural Philosophy come thus in the logical order after Natural History. I shall not labour to prove that every well educated person, especially one who is to have charge of children, should be well acquainted with the nature and composition of water and the atmosphere, and the action of heat and light. All probably are ready to admit that these are most worthy objects of study.

The structure and general economy of animals and plants, are equally wonderful, and the knowledge, especially of the economy of the human body, is not less important to females. To them is necessarily committed the charge of the body, in health and in sickness, during life. How many lives would be saved, and how much unnecessary anxiety and trouble would be avoided, if they were qualified to decide prudently, when alarming inroads were threatened upon the health, and the aid of a physician became necessary. Nearly all naturally strong constitutions might doubtless be kept in continual health, and many weak ones made strong, by skilful care on the part of a mother. The seeds of numerous diseases are now sown, in consequence of imprudence arising from ignorance. Are consumption, dyspepsia and rheumatism evils of so trifling a nature, that a little pains shall not be taken to gain the know-

ledge which would often enable a mother to guard against them? Let it not be said that this knowledge is out of the reach of women, and that the studies are too foreign from their habits and taste. The effect of heat and cold and moisture, upon the system, the suitableness of various kinds of food, what is essential to the healthy action of the lungs and of the skin, the functions of the various organs, are as easily learnt as the principles of arithmetic, and when learnt they will hardly be forgotten.

These studies, moreover, are not only important but delightful. Nothing is more worthy the attention of a thoughtful, reasonable being than the fearful and admirable structure of his own body; and nothing can be better suited to gratify the natural instinct for the wonderful. It is a great mistake to suppose that there is any thing in itself disagreeable in the sight of the frame work and organization of the human body. That it is thought to be so is one of the prejudices of perverse education. I have never witnessed a gleam of more earnest curiosity and delighted satisfaction than shone on the face of a child, whose mind had been guarded against these absurd prepossessions, when allowed to examine the bones of a beautifully prepared skeleton, and have their action and uses explained to him. Nor is it a small advantage of the study, that it raises a woman above the weakness of vulgar fear, and leads her to regard with interest what is intrinsically interesting. And if it is an advantage derived from any part of natural history, that it gives us worthy conceptions of the benevolence and superintending care of the Creator, it is still more strikingly the tendency of a knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the human frame.

Vegetable Physiology, though less important, is but little less interesting, and both form the proper foundation for the study of Natural Religion and their analogy with the revealed manifestations of God's will. These are a subject suited to the mature strength of the human mind.

If a knowledge of the book of nature be of such value, and such

care and pains should be taken to gain possession of facts which may furnish materials for thought and action, for a few years, what preparation should not be made to understand the Book of Revelation, from which alone we can learn the rule of our life, our nature and destiny, and the character of God. Containing truths of such vast consequence to all, coming from high antiquity, written in languages most remote from ours, among strange nations, in distant regions and in states of society which have long ceased to exist, one would suppose that the study of the Bible would be considered as among the most important and considerable parts of the education of every Christian; that the languages, the history, the customs, the geography, of the land from which Christianity came to us, would be looked upon with a deep and earnest interest, commensurate with the importance of its communications to man. We rejoice to hope that this will sooner or later be the case, and that teachers especially, will regard it as a most momentous part of their preparation, to qualify themselves to understand the Scriptures, and to read at least the dialect in which the New Testament was written.

A second great purpose of education I have stated to be to form the language. It is usually thought that the acquisition of language is of less consequence to females than to men, who are destined to the duties of writing and public speaking. But when it is considered that the superintendence of the first formation of the voice, pronunciation and vocabulary of every individual, falls to the female, it ceases to be of little consequence how she is trained to communicate the sweetness, compass and variety of her native tongue. It is then a question of considerable importance how she shall be taught language in the most compendious and perfect manner. It is impossible and unnecessary for me to go fully into this question. I can attempt to do little more than state my conviction, that whenever it can be done, a foundation for the study of language must be laid in the study of the Latin. I would recommend this even when the chief object is the English language, and

when the intention is to learn the languages of the South of Europe, the importance of it is still greater, even on the ground of economy of time. A few facts will make this apparent.

The Latin language retains a characteristic of its mother Greek, in forming many words from a single root, by composition with other elementary words, which are usually monosyllables expressive of the simplest relations of space. These are easily learnt, and when prefixed to another word, give it a new signification partaking of the meaning of both its roots. The word *pono*, for example, compounded with the five syllables *con*, *de*, *in*, *ob*, *sub*, forms a great number of words, from which are derived not less than twenty English words\* the meaning of all of which is immediately obvious to one who knows the six simple words from which they are made. The addition of five other elementary words increases the number of derivatives from *pono* to as many as thirty in our language. From the word *ludo*, and nearly the same elements, are derived twenty four English words, from *duco* more than thirty, and from *mitto* and from *scribo*† more than thirty; in the

\* From *compono* are derived—compound, compose, composition, component, composite, compositor, composure, compost; from *depono*,—depone, deponent, depose, depositary, deposition, deposit, depositor; from *impono*,—impose, imposer, imposition, impost, impostor, imposture; from *oppono*,—oppose, opposition, opposite, opponent, &c.; from *suppono*,—suppose, supposition, &c.

† From *scribo* are derived—scribe, scribble, scrip, scripture, scriptural; from *ascribo*,—ascribe, ascription; from *circumscribo*,—circumscribe, circumscription, circumscriptive; from *conscribo*,—conscript, conscription; from *describo*,—describable, describe, description, descriptive; from *inscribo*,—inscribe, inscription; from *prescribo*,—prescribe, prescriber, prescription, prescriptive; from *proscribo*,—proscribe, proscriber, proscription, proscriptive; from *rescribo*,—rescribe, rescript; from *subscribo*,—subscribe, subscriber, subscription; from *superscribo*,—superscribe, superscription; from *transcribo*,—transcribe, transcriber, transcript, transcription.

From *scribo* are derived, in French, *écrire*, *écriture*, *écrivain*

French language nearly as many, and in the Italian language a still greater number.

*écrivain*; from *conscribo*, *conscript*; from *circumscribo*,—*circonscription*, *circonscrire*; from *describo*,—*décrire*, *description*; from *inscribo*,—*inscription*, *inscrire*; from *prescribo*,—*prescriptible*, *prescription*, *prescrire*; from *proscribo*,—*proscription*, *proscrire*; from *rescribo*,—*rescription*, *rescrit*; from *subscribo*,—*souscripteur*, *souscription*, *souscrire*; from *transcribo*,—*transcription*, *transcrire*.

From *scribo*, in Italian, are derived,—*scritta*, *scritto*, *scrittojo*, *scrittore*, *scrittura*, *scritturale*, *scrivano*, *scrivere*; from *ascribo*,—*ascrivere*; from *circumscribo*,—*circoscrivere*, *circoscrivimento*, *circoscrizione*; from *conscribo*,—*coscrivere*; from *describo*,—*descrivere*, *descrittibile*, *descrittivo*, *descrittore*, *descrizione*; from *inscribo*,—*inscrivibile*, *inscrivere*, *inscrizione*; from *prescribo*,—*prescrivere*, *prescrizione*, *prescritto*; from *proscribo*,—*proscrivere*, *proscrizione*; from *rescribo*,—*rescrivere*, *rescritto*; from *subscribo*,—*sos* or *sottoscrivere*, *soscrizione*, *soscritto*; from *suprascribo*,—*soprascritta*, *soprascrivere*, *soprascrizione*; from *transcribo*,—*trascrivere*, *trascritto*.

From *duco* are derived, in English, *duct*; from *abduco*,—*abduco*, *abducent*, *abduction*, *abductor*; from *adduco*,—*adduce*, *adducent*; from *circumduco*,—*circumduct*, *circumduction*; from *conduco*,—*conduce*, *conducibile*, *conducive*, *conduct*, *conduction*, *conductor*, *conductress*, *conduit*; from *deduco*,—*deduce*, *deducible*, *deducive*, *deduct*, *deduction*, *deductive*; from *educo*,—*educe*, *education*; from *induco*,—*induce*, *induction*, *inductive*; from *introduco*,—*introduce*, *introduction*, *introductive*, *introductory*; from *obduco*,—*obduce*, *obduction*; from *produco*,—*produce*, *producent*, *producible*, *product*, *productile*, *production*, *productive*; from *reduco*,—*reduce*, *reducible*, *reduction*, *reductive*; from *seduco*,—*seduce*, *seducible*, *seduction*; from *subduco*,—*subduce*, *subduct*, *subduction*; from *traduco*,—*traduce*, *traducible*, *traduction*.

From *duco* are derived, in French, *duc*, *ductile*, *ductilité*; from *conduco*,—*conducteur*, *conductrice*, *conduction*, *conduire*, *conduit*, *conduite*; from *deduco*,—*deduction*, *deduire*; from *induco*,—*induction*, *induire*; from *introduco*,—*introduceur*, *introductrice*, *introdutif*, *introduction*, *introduire*; from *produco*,—*production*, *produire*, *produit*; from *reduco*,—*reductible*, *reductif*, *reduction*, *reduire*; from *seduco*,—*seducteur*, *seductrice*, *seduction*, *seduire*; from *traduco*,—*traducteur*, *traduction*, *traduire*, *traduisible*.

From *duco*, in Italian, are derived, *duca*, *duce*, *duttore*; from *adduco*,—*addurre*, *adducitore*, *adducitrice*; from *conduco*,—*condotta*, *condottiere*, *condotto*, *condurre*, *conducevole*, *conducimento*, *conducitore*, *conducitrice*, *conduttore*; from *deduco*,—*dedurre*, *deduzione*;

When a child has learned from a dictionary the meaning of the word *position*, he is no nearer than before to the meaning of the word *composition*, and when he has looked for both, he is not able even to guess at the sense of *supposition*, or *imposition*. - But knowing the elementary syllables, and finding the meaning of *pono*, he is only to use his mind and not his fingers, to arrive at the meaning of all the words compounded of them. So it is in a thousand other cases, and he knows them not for one language only but for several.\*

I do not insist here upon the discipline, which the learning of this ancient language affords to the mind, though I know none equal to it for the formation of the judgment and the taste,—nor of its suitableness as an introduction to almost all other studies.

I must briefly notice an objection which is made to the study, which, if well founded, would be of vital importance. It is said that the Latin and Greek authors are not a proper study for females, because of their defective morality. This is admitted to be true of some of them, and those certainly ought not to be studied. It is not true of the select authors which are usually put into the hands of children. Heathen theology and heathen morality were wretchedly enough defective, it is true, and those only who know how miserably low they were, can rightly prize the gift of the Gospel.

from *induco*,—*indurre*, *inducimento*, *inducitore*; from *introduco*,—*introdotta*, *introducimento*, *introducitore*, *introdurre*, *introduttivo*, *introduttore*, *introduzione*; from *perduco*,—*perdurre*; from *produco*,—*prodotta*, *producibile*, *produttore*, *produttrice*, *produrre*, *produttibile*, *produttivo*, *produzione*; from *reduco*,—*re-* or *ri-**ducimento*, *riduttore*, *ridurre*, *riduzione*; from *seduco*,—*sedurre*, *seducente*, *seducimento*, *seduttore*, *seduttrice*, *seduzione*; from *subduco*,—*subdurre*; from *traduco*,—*tradurre*, *traducitore*, *traduttore*, *traduzione*.

\* It may perhaps be said that when a child is learning Latin, he does not notice the English words which are derived from it. This will be perhaps true if he be very carelessly instructed; but as he advances in the knowledge of the language, he cannot avoid it, and often becomes acquainted with a vast number of derivative words without knowing whence he learnt them.

But whether it be that the purifying hand of time has destroyed much of what was worthless in the writings of the ancients, or that the corrupters of the ancient race were content with giving example without precept, it is not the Moores and Byrons and Bulwers and Fieldings of antiquity, whose works have come down to us ; it is Plato and Cicero, Virgil and Homer, and the grave lawgivers and historians of former days,—the august masters of the Miltons, Dantes, Tassos, Fenelons, Addisons, Racines, Cowpers and Coleridges of our own.\* Is it nothing that these lights of modern times borrowed only noble and pure thoughts from the ancients? They were nourished with the spirit of antiquity.

Hither as to their fountain, other stars,  
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light.

We boast, and not without reason, of our English literature as one of the purest of modern times. Yet we may venture, without fear of contradiction, to assert, that there has been published, in verse and prose, in the English language alone, within the present century, more of a demoralizing tendency than can be found in all that has come down from the libraries of Greece and Rome.

Doubtless these languages, as well as others, are often taught absurdly, and many of the objections brought against them are due to the indolence, or ignorance, or stupidity of master, or pupil, or both ; but I presume that most persons who have had varied experience in teaching, will agree with me in the conclusion to which my own has led, that wherever five or six years are to be devoted to study, the time spent upon Latin is more than wholly saved, in the facility, skill and power, the learning it imparts for other acquisitions.

\* If the study of the classic authors have the corrupting tendency which is sometimes attributed to it, how has it happened that the writers above-mentioned so entirely escaped this influence? It would be difficult to find an equal number of moderns whose writings breathe a higher morality, and it would be impossible to find the same number more thoroughly imbued with the spirit—essentially a pure and free spirit, of classical antiquity.

The third great purpose of education I stated to be the discipline of the faculties ; and in this I would be understood to include whatever goes to form the whole character of man, as a thinking, feeling and accountable being, for the present life and for the future. Time would fail me in attempting the slightest sketch of this part of my subject. What relates to the home education of a female—by far the most important part of her education,—how the household virtues may be formed, by what union of wisdom and gentleness the pure mind may be trained to modesty, gentleness, and firmness,—how the taint of evil may be washed out and the weeds of sin removed, must be left to other occasions and abler hands. I shall confine myself to that part which properly belongs to the schoolmaster, and on this I have only time for a few brief remarks.

The most usual studies which have the discipline of the mind as peculiarly their object, are mental arithmetic, geometry, and composition.

The value of mental arithmetic, is now, in consequence of the writings of an individual, generally and pretty well understood. The introduction of text-books upon the subject, has changed the study of arithmetic from a perplexing and mechanical manipulation to an important intellectual exercise. To derive all the advantage from it of which it is susceptible, the method of mental arithmetic should be more extensively applied and longer continued. Instead of being only an introduction to written arithmetic, it should go along with and beyond it. It comprehends the more valuable part of algebra. If rightly used, nothing can have a more direct tendency to form habits of concise, exact, and rapid reasoning.

This study may be succeeded by geometry, an application of a similar process to a longer train of arguments. When the mind is sufficiently advanced to be capable of it, I know of no reason why females should be deprived of the advantages of this best of means of discipline. They, at least as much as we, have occasion for patience, correctness of judg-



ment, and the power of long keeping a single object in view, qualities which the study of geometry tends to mature. Whoever will consider the unity of purpose and the firmness required in the management of a child, will be ready to admit that the possession of them by mothers is important to the interests of the race.

But the most extensive means of discipline are afforded by the practice of composition. The importance of this branch of instruction is so generally acknowledged, that it is unnecessary to dwell upon it. In the usual course, it is almost the only mode of exercising the talent of invention, and the best of perfecting the judgment and taste, and giving a command of the materials already laid up in the memory.

The higher species of composition, such as the writing of essays and discussions, should be preceded and accompanied by frequent and extensive reading of the best English authors. Where it can be done,—and books are now so cheap that there are few cases where it cannot,—the authors themselves should be introduced to the learner, instead of the volumes of extracts which are usually and perhaps necessarily employed in schools. It is only from a mind full from reading that good thoughts can commonly be drawn.

The enumeration I have made might be greatly extended, as almost every thing which is acquired, may be so acquired as to furnish a valuable exercise to some of the powers of the mind. I have very slightly noticed some of those only which have discipline as their immediate object.

The extent to which I would have the education of a female in favorable circumstances carried, is sufficiently declared by the sketch of studies which I have exhibited. There are thousands in our country who are capable, by their talents and leisure, of such an education as I have described. The great mass of our population are in easy circumstances, and, almost universally, the business by which families are supported, is conducted exclusively by the men. The daughters, not only of men of wealth, but of professional men, of farmers, mechanics, and

often of laborers, have the greater part of their time until they are married, at their own disposal. They may waste it in the frivolities of gossip and dress and fashion, or they may employ it for the noble purposes for which it is given them. Intellect is equally distributed. How often, in the brief period of our country's history, have the finest geniuses emerged from what, in the older countries, are called the lower classes of society. What then is to prevent the females of all portions of our community from being highly educated? And why should they not be so? The future lights of the nation, those who are to guide us in literature, in religion, in arts and the glories of peace, are as likely to spring up among the villages and in the remote districts of the country, as in the cities. Give them mothers worthy to educate them, and then will they be more likely to imbibe the generous spirit of self-devotion, the contempt of difficulties, and the love of liberty, of country and of truth, which should be the heritage of the citizens of a free republic.

There is scarcely a family in New-England which has not the privilege of sending its children to a public school for a large part of the year. On the instructors of these schools, especially on the female instructors, who are employed for a greater portion of the time, does it depend to elevate the standard of education to what its importance demands. As long as an instructor is considered well qualified for his office, who knows no language but his own, and that, of consequence, imperfectly, who is not acquainted with any branch of natural science with which he should store his own mind and that of his pupil, nor of mathematical or moral science, by which to discipline the mind and form the character,—so long must the schools remain in their present condition, and the unimagined advantages of a better system be lost. But there is not a teacher who has not leisure, each year, to make important additions to his own acquirements, and valuable improvements in his modes of teaching.

Hitherto, it has been considered of more importance that men should be well educated, than that women should be. It is

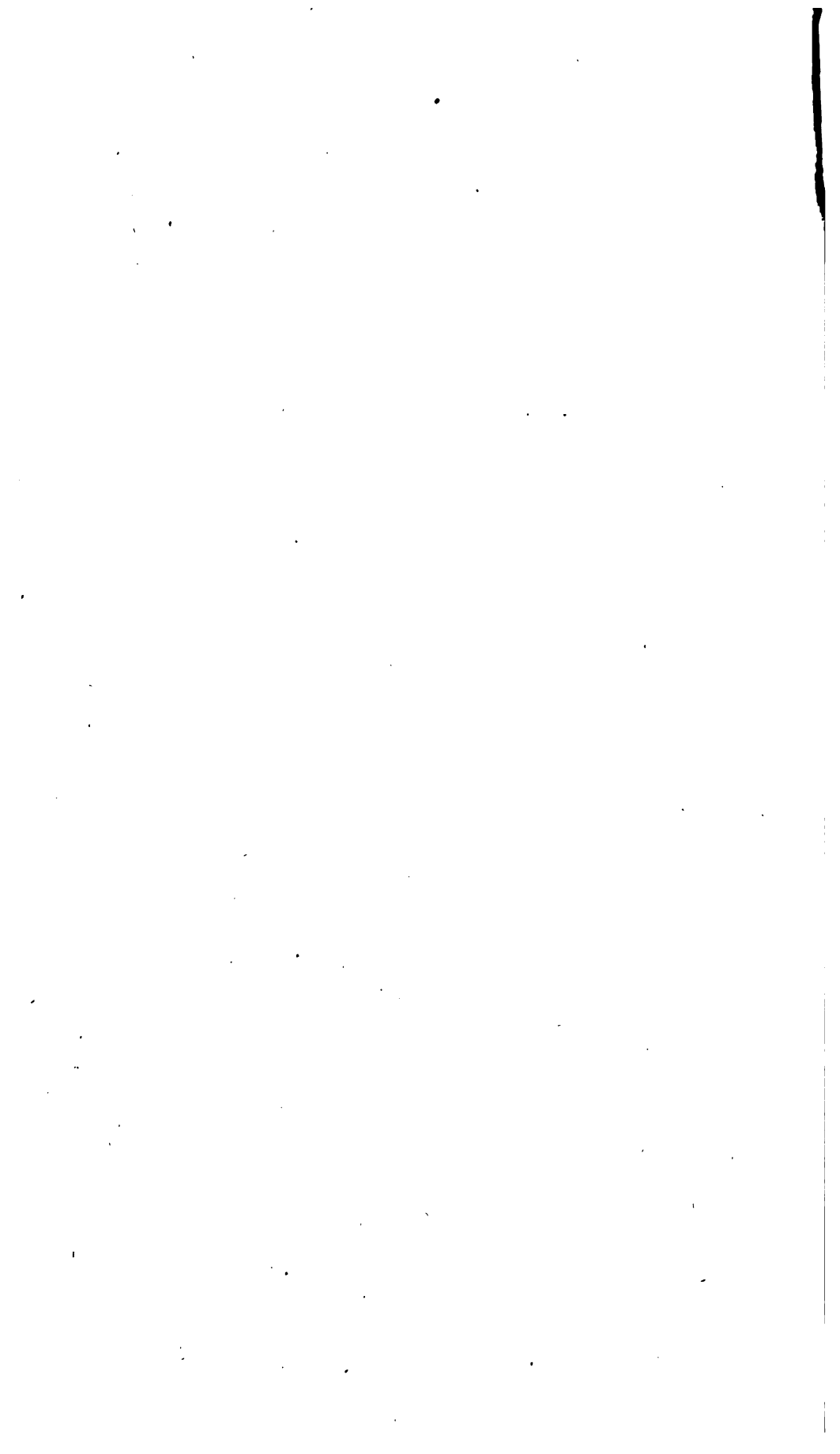
not so. With the exception of what belongs to the professions and to the business of government, it is more important to the community that women should be well educated. No human being is so completely isolated among his fellow creatures, but that his possessing a highly cultivated mind shall be a common good. In man the good is communicated indirectly. A highly cultivated female, on the contrary, exerts an immediate influence upon her children, and through them upon the human race. Educate all the men of a generation, and leave the woman uneducated, and every child under their influence begins his public education with all the disadvantages of his father. Educate all the females, and you will give a permanent impulse to the onward movement of the race, which it can never lose. Each individual begins his progress from a higher level, and, with equal exertion, will bequeath a richer inheritance of knowledge and wisdom to his successors.

It has been urged, and with great justice, to account for the little that has until recently been done by our countrymen, in literature and the sciences, that our men want leisure, that, in consequence of the equal division of property, almost every man has some profession or business to which he must devote the greater part of his time. It is not so with our women. They have as much leisure as the females of the most favored community in the old world. We are not willing to think that they have less capacity for improvement. They have already afforded some illustrious examples which would lead us to infer no inferiority to the most distinguished of their sisters beyond the ocean. We cannot think that literature or the arts and sciences would suffer, in consequence of a higher degree of favor. At least the influence could not be inauspicious, which would be shed upon them by females of sentiment heightened by religious principle, and taste refined by a generous education, who should breathe into infant genius in his cradle, the love of nature and beauty, with aspirations after excellence and perfection.

Education cannot be universal which is not shared in at

least an equal degree by females. The magnanimous virtues, disinterested and devoted love of country, cannot be communicated but by mothers of the pure minds and dignified character which virtue and self-respect alone can give. The spirit of Grecian liberty failed not until her mothers were corrupted by the softness and vices of the East. And the Romans lost not all the freedom of the old republic, until Roman matrons had abandoned the care of their children to nurses and schoolmasters who were Grecian slaves.

No nation ever acquired permanent liberty in which marriage was not sacred, and the female character respected and deserving of respect. That our liberty may be permanent, our females must receive a high, pure, liberal, religious education, such as shall qualify them to educate men; and it is only by giving them such an education, that we can diffuse through our community the universal knowledge of right and justice, on which our institutions depend, and without which they will disappoint the hopes of the world.



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**LECTURE III.**

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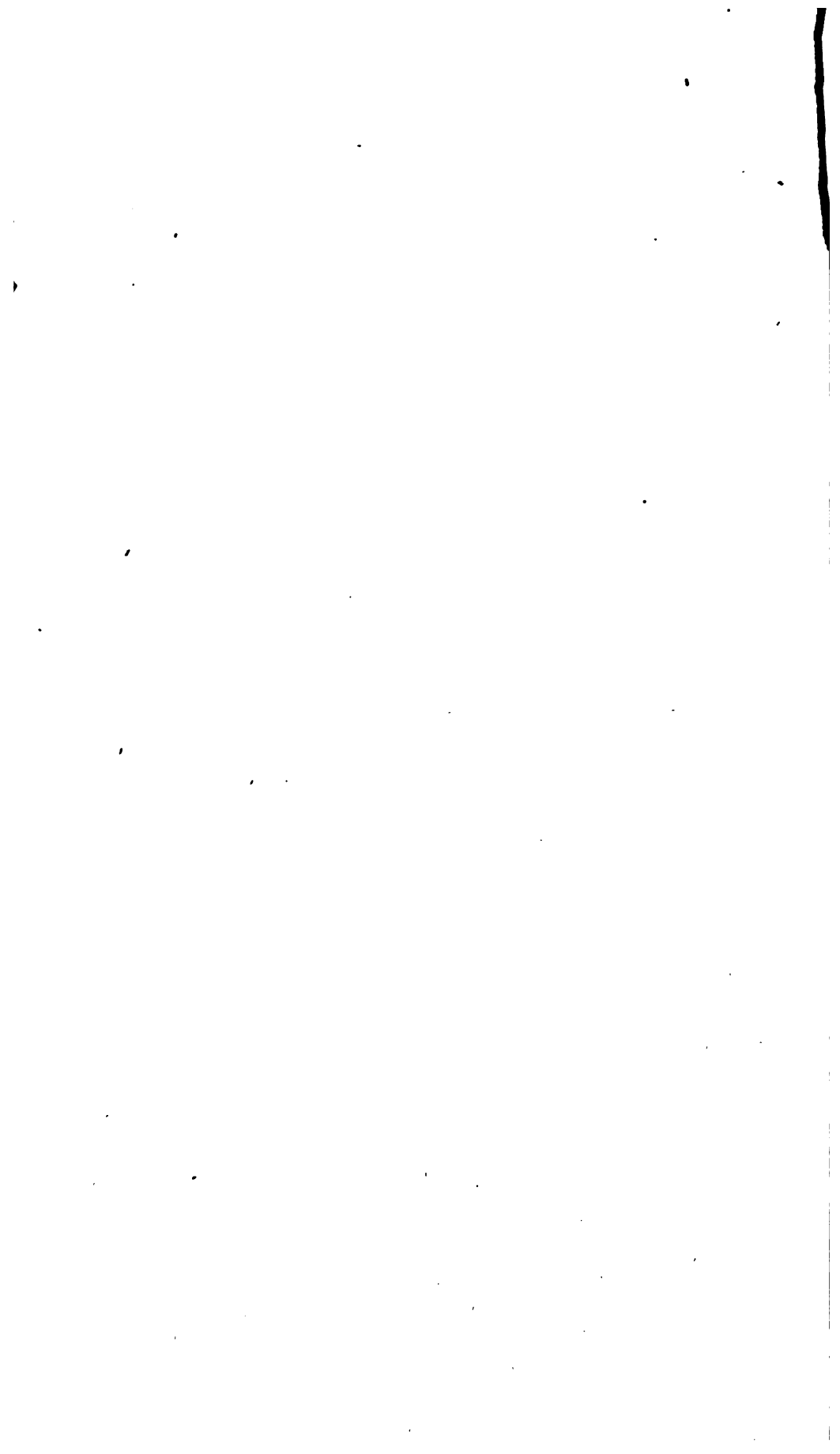
**ON**

**MORAL EDUCATION.**

**BY**

**JACOB ABBOTT.**

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## MORAL EDUCATION.

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It will probably be generally acknowledged, that in our schools the department of moral education is in the rear of all the others. It is not that the principles by which the conscience and the heart are to be reached, are less sure or less attainable than those which we obey in cultivating the intellect ; but that they are less generally understood, and have a much slighter influence in regulating the practice. Every teacher feels that it is his *direct business* to secure the progress of his pupils in the arts of reading, writing and calculation ; but we leave the affections and dispositions of the heart to grow as they will, and it is to be feared that the atmosphere of the school-room withers and blights, as often as it protects and sustains.

Suppose that some lover of statistics were to go through the families among whom we respectively teach, with the view of collecting from them authentic information in regard to the *intellectual* and also to the *moral* progress of their children.

Under the first head we may imagine the enquirer to ascertain precisely what progress in the various branches of *school instruction* has been made. He may enquire into the state of the intellectual powers of the pupils when they entered school,—and learn whether any, and if any, what progress in reading, spelling, writing and arithmetic, has been made from month to month, and year to year. The result of such enquiries would unquestionably be the evidence in almost every



stitute, that the means of moral influence which are placed so extensively in the hands of our profession, ought to be employed for a useful purpose, and I shall accordingly turn my attention immediately to what may be of directly practical tendency.

1. The first step which a teacher must take, I do not mean *in* his course of moral education, but before he is prepared to enter that course, is to obtain the entire, unqualified submission of his school to his *authority*. We often err when designing to exert a moral influence, by substituting throughout our whole system persuasion for power; but we soon find that the gentle winning influence of moral suasion, however beautiful in theory, will often fall powerless upon the heart, and we then must have authority, to fall back upon, or all is lost. I have known parents, whose principle it was, not to require any thing of the child, excepting what the child could understand and feel to be right. The mother in such a case, forgets that a heart in temptation is proof against all argument; and I have literally known a case where the simple question of going to bed, required a parental pleading of an hour, in which the mother's stores of rhetoric and logic were exhausted in vain. Teachers sometimes too, resolve that they will resort to no arbitrary measures. They will explain the nature of duty, and the happiness of its performance, and lead their pupils to love what is right without bringing in the authority of arbitrary command. But the plan fails. However men may differ in their theories of human nature, it is pretty generally agreed by those who have tried the experiment, that neither school nor family can be preserved in order by eloquence and argument alone. There must be authority. The pupils may not often feel it. But they *must know that it is always at hand*, and the pupils must be taught to submit to it as to simple *authority*. The subjection of the governed to the will of one man, in such a way that the expression of his will must be the final decision of every question, is the only government that will answer in school or in family. A

government not of persuasion, not of reasons assigned, not of the will of the majority, but of the will of the one who presides.

The experiment has been tried of a republican form of government in schools, and has been in some instances highly successful. But let it be observed it is the republican *form* of government alone. I do not believe that the experiment of a government republican in reality, was ever tried in any school. I mean by a really republican government the relinquishment of the concerns of the school into the pupils' hands—so that the teachers may stand entirely aloof—feeling no responsibility except in the duties of instruction. A republican *form* may succeed where the teacher has the genius to govern the school himself *through* all the machinery of the forms. In such cases the forms may do much good; but the real, honest, bona fide surrender of a literary institution into the hands of its pupils is an experiment which I believe no projector has yet been bold enough to try.

Although the principal of the school must thus really have full control, I do not mean that the *tone* and *manner* of authority are to be generally employed in the management of the school. They doubtless ought very seldom to be employed. What I contend for is that the authority itself should exist—and be appealed to frequently enough to show its existence and its power. All the ordinary arrangements of a well regulated school will go on without it. A request will be complied with, as implicitly as a command obeyed. But in order to feel safe and strong, the teacher must always possess power to which he knows he can at any time appeal. And it is not useless while it lies dormant. The government of the United States employs its hundreds of workmen at Springfield and at Harper's Ferry in the manufacture of muskets. The inspector examines every one as it is finished, with great care. He adjusts the flint—and tries it again and again until its emitted shower of sparks is of proper brilliancy,—and when satisfied that all is right, he packs it away with its thousand companions, to sleep probably in their boxes in quiet obscurity

oreve A hundred thousand of these deadly instruments form a volcano of slumbering power, which never has been awakened, and which we hope never will. The government never makes use of them. One of its agents, a custom-house officer, waits upon you for the payment of a bond. He brings no musket. He keeps no troops. He comes with the gentleness and civility of a social visit. But you know, that if compliance with the just demands of your government is refused, and the resistance is sustained, force after force would be brought to bear upon you, until the whole hundred thousand muskets should speak with their united and tremendous energy. The government of these United States is thus a mighty engine, working with immense momentum, but the parts which bear upon the citizens conceal their power by the elegance of the workmanship, and by the slowness and apparent gentleness of their motion. If you yield to it, it glides smoothly and pleasantly by. If you resist it, it crushes you to atoms.

Such ought to be the character of all government. The teacher of a school especially must act upon these principles. He will be mild and gentle in his manners; in his intercourse with his pupils he will use the language and assume the air, not of stern authority, but of request and persuasion. But there must be authority at the bottom to sustain him, or he can do nothing successfully, especially in attempting to reach the hearts of his pupils. As to the means of obtaining the proper ascendancy I am not now to speak. I speak only of its absolute necessity in order to enable us to do any thing efficiently in cultivating the heart.

The reason why it is necessary is this. First, the man who has not the full, unqualified, complete control of his scholars, must spend his time and wear out his spirits in preserving any tolerable order in his dominions; and secondly, he who has not authority will be so constantly vexed and fretted by the occurrences which will take place around him, that all his moral power will be neutralized by the withering influence of his clouded brow. To do good to our pupils, our own

spirits must be composed and at rest:—and especially if we wish to influence favorably the hearts of others, our own must rise above the troubled waters of irritation and anxious care.

There is one point more to be considered before I come to the direct means of exerting moral influence.

It is not moral *instruction* chiefly at which we are to aim, but moral *education*. That is to say, our object is not to teach our pupils what their duty *is*, but to induce them to *do it*. They know what their duty is already. I do not mean that they need no instruction, but that instruction is not the main point. The difficulty with the whole human family is not ignorance in regard to right and wrong, but a want of moral principle, to resist the temptation to do acknowledged wrong. The virtuous,—in whose cases the temptation has been weakened by protracted resistance, and moral principle strengthened by long continued cultivation,—are often inclined to imagine that to know duty distinctly will ensure its performance. They do not understand how completely conscience may be seared, and how imperious are the demands of propensities and passions which have long been indulged.

A few weeks since a man was carried to a hospital in this vicinity—convulsed and maddened with *delirium tremens*,—the frequent penalty of long continued intemperance. He spent, as is usual in such cases, several days in agony, mental and bodily, gnashing his teeth and lacerating his tongue in the violence of the paroxysms. Time however, and the remedies applied prevailed, and in a few days, he lay weak and exhausted upon his bed,—but convalescent. At this time another patient was brought into the room, raving in the same dreadful malady, and as is not uncommon, some ardent spirit was once or twice administered by his physician. The convalescent man said, and no doubt sincerely, that he wished he had *delirium tremens* again, that he might take spirit as a medicine.

Suppose this man to go forth into the world, can he be re-

strained from yielding to temptation, by being instructed in the nature of intemperance and the greatness of the sufferings which it brings upon its victims? This case is indeed a strong one, but it illustrates the universal nature of guilt. It is all infatuation. We do what, at the time we do it, we know to be wrong, and consequently we want not *light*, not *information*, but the growth and the strength of moral principle to sustain us in a path already plain. Let me not be understood to say that instruction is not important,—it is highly important as an auxiliary, I only say it is not the main thing. Children must be taught their duty; the consequences of guilt of every kind must be plainly pointed out; but, after all, if this instruction is given in a cold and speculative manner, boys will go on, in the very face of it. Our aim must be to reach the heart—not to enlighten the intellect, but to build up and sustain conscience and moral principle.

But how shall we reach the heart? It is easy to *instruct* but how shall we *influence to action*?

The true theory of moral discipline seems to be this. When the human heart is assailed by temptation, if conscience and moral principle triumph, they are strengthened by the victory. If they yield, they are weakened, and prepared to be vanquished more easily on a subsequent attack. If then we would train up moral principle, we bring the individual into circumstances of temptation, strong enough to *try* that principle, but not to overwhelm it. The scenes of trial should increase in difficulty as the plant we endeavor to cherish increases in vigor. For each conquest renders the succeeding one more easy. The heart advances from victory to victory, or, as a writer of high authority, very forcibly expresses it, "from strength to strength." If however temptation should once be too strong, and moral principle should yield, a great injury is done. Conscience is seared, the moral sense is blunted, and the pilgrim is thrown back in his course, to take his weary steps anew. Virtuous principle is a growing plant, whose roots and stem the winds of heaven strengthen. When pressed by the breeze,

(unless it is pressed too strongly), every fibre clings more closely—and at every weak point, a shoot puts forth to give greater firmness to the support. All this is well, but let the gale rise beyond this degree, and the thriving stem is strained,—branches are broken,—and perhaps the plant is torn with all its roots from the ground.

It is surprising how much the question of growing better or worse, depends upon the *strength of the temptation*.

One teacher leaves a class of little boys saying, "I am going away a few minutes. Do you think if I allow A. to take the slate and read these figures the rest can copy them upon their slates?" "Yes Sir." "But do you think you shall preserve good order?" "Yes, sir, we will try." "You may try then, but it will be difficult, for you are not accustomed to take care of yourselves, and it is by no means an easy art. But I think you may succeed, by following these directions. A. is to read very distinctly, and slowly, and the others are to pay careful attention,—write every figure as soon as it is named, and not ask any questions unless it is absolutely necessary."

The teacher then leaves them, and with the precautions he has taken, the temptation to disorder is not too great to be overcome, and that class will be more easily managed after such an experiment than before. And by a repetition of similar experiments, it can acquire habits of perfect self-control.

Another teacher in a school, not previously trained to self-government, leaves twenty of his rude boys in the school-room during the intermission, charging them to be still and quiet, and not to be guilty of any impropriety. In half an hour after he is gone, the stranger who walks along the street is arrested by the noise and uproar which fill the room. The temptation afforded by the time and place was overwhelming. A few might have formed a feeble resolution to comply with their teacher's wishes, when they were expressed, but such resolutions could be no adequate defence. They are borne away as by a whirlwind, and I need not say that being thus con-

quered, they were just prepared to be conquered easily again. The repetition too of such an experiment will give to momentary feeling an habitual and impetuous control over conscience and moral principle. These two experiments are alike in every respect but one. In both cases there was to be temptation; in both liberty,—in both there must be a struggle. But in the one, the circumstances were so adjusted that duty was to conquer; in the other it might easily have been perceived that she must fall.

Our rule of moral education then is this. *Keep virtuous principle always in the field of battle, but be sure so to fortify and encourage and protect her that she shall always conquer.* She must be exposed. Without exposure there can be no healthy and vigorous growth. But do not force her to too rough or sudden an exposure, or you rend the roots of the stem which you wish to strengthen and mature.

Suppose then that a teacher enters upon his duties in an unruly and irregular school, what are the particular steps which he shall take in order to exert in it a powerful moral influence? The first thing to be done, as has already been urged, is to obtain complete and unqualified command of the school. This is to be done with as much gentle dexterity as possible, but it must in some way be *done*. The pupils must understand, that the will of the teacher is there the supreme law. This will must indeed be founded on just and equitable principles, but the teacher is not accountable to his pupils for those principles. He may when he thinks it best, and doubtless he often should, explain his reasons, but he ought to guard against their supposing that their obedience is to be founded on their conviction of the propriety of the teacher's requirements. The school must learn to submit to *authority*. No community of children that I have seen are capable of being governed by argument and persuasion. These methods may *generally* succeed, but we cannot *rely upon them*. They will do upon a smooth sea in pleasant weather, but we must have very different ballast in a storm.

Although then this authority must exist, it must not, in its repulsive forms, be often appealed to. If a school is governed openly and habitually by harshness or by force, there will be such an atmosphere diffused over it, that the teacher will have little hope of success in reaching the hearts of his pupils. If however by his adroitness rather than by his physical force, he has obtained an unquestioned ascendancy—and all is quiet, and order, and submission, the way is opened for another preparatory step. I mean securing the confidence and affection of the pupils. This is indispensable. The man whom we dislike will not easily allure us to his principles.

A distinguished teacher once made this remark : “ To make your pupils like you, all that is necessary is for you to like them.” This is absolutely necessary. Empty professions of interest and attachment will not succeed ; children will not be deceived by them. If we do not feel a strong spontaneous interest in the characteristics and the progress of childhood, such an interest must be awakened, or all will be in vain. The teacher who endeavors to mould the heart without entering into its feelings, and sympathizing with its joys and sorrows, will have a hopeless task—all will be cold and lifeless.

Suppose then these preliminary steps to have been taken. The school is entirely under the command of the teacher, and, by the interest which he has taken in the pupils, he has secured their confidence and attachment as well as their obedience,—what shall be his first step in training up the hearts of his pupils to duty ? It is obvious, from the principle which I have laid down above, that the first lesson must be an *easy* one. The school as a school has been very slightly accustomed to make any moral effort.—A little temptation will overwhelm them. The first exposure then, by which moral principle is to be strengthened, must be a *gentle* exposure. Perhaps the most suitable effort to be first made is to form among the pupils habits of self-control in regard to the general order and stillness of the room. To illustrate the manner



in which the teacher's influence may be exerted we will imagine the following conversation :—

Teacher. "Suppose I were to tell you, boys, that you were to have either a holiday to-morrow or two holidays next week, and that you might decide which you would have ; could you decide easily ?"

Boys, all together, " Yes Sir."

" Which would you have ?"

Boys in confusion, " Tomorrow." " Next week." " To-morrow."

" Some say one and some the other. Now suppose I were to request you in the next recess, to talk over this subject and decide it ;—could you do it ?"

" Yes Sir."

" I think you could not. You would all be talking about it in confusion ;—You could not tell how many were in favor of one and how many of the other. The recess would pass and nobody could tell me the decision. There would not be any decision."

James, one of the oldest boys, replies, " We might take a paper and go around and ask each one, and mark it down."

" Who might take the paper ?"

" Any body."

" But who should decide, which person should do it. If it was left for any one to do it, several would probably commence, and thus there would be confusion."

" Besides," continues the teacher, " suppose the boys were almost equally divided, I fear that some of those who were in the minority would be dissatisfied and find fault ; and talk harshly and angrily against the others. How many of you think it would be so ?"

Many hands are raised.

The teacher, in the same free and colloquial manner, shows that ~~men~~ are able to decide all questions in regular quiet assemblies, where all are still, and adhere closely to the rules necessary for preserving order.

"Did you ever hear it said," continues the teacher, "that some nations are not fit for a republican government?"

Boys, "Yes Sir."

"One great reason is, they cannot have quiet and orderly assemblies to discuss and decide questions. When those people come together they all talk at once, and make confusion. They are all very eager to have their own wishes prevail, and are unwilling to acquiesce in the decision of the majority. They are like most boys in a school-room. If the teacher leaves them a moment, there is an end of all quiet and regularity. Is it not so generally in schools?"

Boys. "Yes Sir."

"Would it be so here if I were to leave the room five minutes?"

A pause.

"I presume it would. Though still I think it probable that if I were to give you an opportunity to try, many would endeavor to keep themselves in order without any one to watch them. How many of you would like to try?"

Probably many hands would be raised, and if from the peculiar circumstances of the school, and from the character of the principal boys, it should appear judicious to do it, at some time when the teacher is called away by business, the room might be left for five minutes, for the purpose of giving an opportunity to practise this self-control.

Once when I made this experiment, a conversation like the following ensued on my return.

"I am going to ask some questions which I should like to have those answer who please. I have no idea that the school has been perfectly still. It is not possible that you should acquire perfect self-control by one single effort. I should like however to know how well you have succeeded."

"In the first place, probably some of you did wrong deliberately; or at least you did something which now you know was wrong, and which you would not do again. Now if there

are any such, and if they are frank and honest enough to acknowledge it, I wish they would rise.

Several slowly and hesitatingly arose. I observed that others looked perplexed, and I added, as they were rising one after another, "I wish none to rise who are afraid—none but those who are cordially willing to acknowledge that they have done wrong."

Several others stood while I was speaking; after a moment's pause I continued, "Those that are now standing have done wrong and are willing to acknowledge it. Probably there are others who wish to conceal it. They of course remain sitting."

"How many of those who are now standing are willing to tell what they have done?"

Nearly all the hands were raised.

"I have not time to enquire now. You may therefore sit; and all those who can honestly say that they did not do any thing improper while I was out may rise."

About half the school immediately rose.

"You think that you have done nothing wrong, but perhaps you have forgotten something. How many are willing that if the others noticed any thing wrong in your conduct that they should state it?"

All the hands were raised and the enquiry was accordingly made. Several particulars were stated—and slight but not intentional irregularities were discovered. By such a mode of enquiry the true state of the school during my absence was easily and pleasantly ascertained, and the subject was dismissed by remarks indicative that I was satisfied and pleased with the result, and considered them as having made one successful experiment in the art of self-control. In a few days the experiment was repeated and the process continued, until in a few months I could at any time leave the school with perfect confidence that all would be regular and quiet until my return. I assumed throughout the whole the attitude of assisting them to acquire an art which they were desirous to acquire, and

though I always ascertained and noticed every thing that was wrong, I took much more notice of the cases of success than of failure. In securing obedience slight transgressions must receive special but not severe attention; but in endeavoring to exert a moral influence upon the motives of the heart it is much easier and pleasanter to allure to what is right than to drive from what is wrong.

When such an experiment as this has been tried, if it has been successful, a great point has been gained. The pupil has tasted a new pleasure—the happiness of voluntary effort in doing duty. From acting as he had heretofore been accustomed to act, in entire dependence on the watchfulness and care of his teacher,—he has advanced to the dignity of self-control. He begins to feel that it is degrading to him to be watched like an infant, and to be regarded incapable of moral effort. If the succeeding steps in the series are skilfully taken—and the process is not urged too fast—the pupil will soon find a new pleasure in the voluntary discharge of duty,—in meeting and resisting temptation,—in receiving proofs of confidence and showing himself worthy of the trust. When these feelings are once made prevalent in a school, they may easily be turned to the attainment of any moral object. The taste for moral improvement and the feeling of moral power is formed, and all that is now necessary is for the teacher to go steadily forward, presenting one duty after another, and bringing his pupils into circumstances where they have opportunity to perform the duties, and to resist the opposing temptations. He must watch them in all their course. No general directions can supply the place of ingenuity on his part—or of untiring fidelity.

I have selected interest in the good order of the school as one subject, and as perhaps the most favorable one for the commencement of the teacher's efforts to inspire his pupils with a love of moral effort and self-control. The interest of the pupils may, on this subject, by skilful cultivation, be carried to a great extent,—so that nearly all the arrangements of the school may be delegated to them, and entrusted to their care.

If this is done however it must be the distinct understanding that the power is from the teacher ; that he and not the pupil is the fountain of power, and he can at any time resume all that he has conferred.

In my own practice this system is pursued. Almost every question which occurs in the administration of the school is referred to the scholars for decision. They however very distinctly understand that whatever power they thus exercise is power delegated from me to them ; that I can at any time resume it, or suspend it, and alter, annul or reverse their decisions. The manner in which the business is arranged is this. During the day any pupil is at liberty to write upon a slip of paper, any question relating to the general business of the school any proposal for new regulations in any respect, or a modification of those already existing,—or to express her dissatisfaction with of any of the arrangements of the school, or of any practice prevailing in it. These *propositions*, as they are technically called, are at the close of the school brought to me. They are read aloud. The questions are answered,—motions are put,—plans suggested are approved or condemned, either by myself or by referring them to a general vote, according to the nature of the case. This simple practice has more effect in making me acquainted with the state of opinion and feeling in school, in interesting the scholars in the successful operation of my plans, and in preserving order and regularity, than all which I do beside.

That the audience may the more fully understand the practical application of the system, I will read the Propositions which came before the school on the day when this paragraph was penned. That it may be fully understood, that this is a specimen of the *ordinary operation* of the system, I ought to state that these remarks were written in the morning, with the resolution of inserting the Propositions of that day before I knew what they were to be.

*Proposed*, That a committee be chosen out of the first class of composition, to correct the compositions of the second class.

Mr. Abbott, Will you please to explain to us how the attraction of the moon can make tides.

*Proposed,* That a new pasteboard be placed in each stationary desk bearing the label, Miscellaneous Questions, or something of the kind; for some of the scholars have frequently wished to ask questions on philosophical and other subjects, but as they seemed hardly appropriate to the proposition paper, they have omitted to make enquiries of this nature.

Mr. Abbott, How can I do any thing to prevent my little sister telling lies?

*Proposed,* That a new class be formed in geometry, as some would like to begin.

Some individuals will undoubtedly think that in reading these papers I go into unnecessary details. Perhaps it is so. But when I sit listening to the lectures of the other gentlemen, I always welcome with peculiar interest every approach to circumstantial detail. I hunger and thirst after practical and particular information. I want to look through the lecturer into his school to see and to hear what transpires there—what his plans are in their detail, how they operate and what is their success; and I am of opinion that such particularity, if we will but adopt it, will be far more interesting and profitable than any general speculations however important and just.

The number of papers is usually much greater each day. It varies from five to twenty. Twenty minutes is regularly appropriated to reading them, and disposing of the business brought up.

This general subject—interesting the pupils in the regular and orderly operation of the school—I have thus dwelt upon, because I have considered it as the easiest field to cultivate, the one by which the pupil may most readily be led to *commence the habit* and to taste the pleasure of self-control. If the scholars can become really interested in the success and prosperity of the school, so as to feel that a part of the responsibility rests upon them, and to be willing to make effort, and submit to self-denial spontaneously—for the promotion

of the general good—they are prepared for higher moral efforts, in more difficult spheres. The teacher has obtained possession of the reins by which the heart, the conscience, the moral principle is to be guided.

The progress of this discussion leads us very evidently now to enquire into the particular means of carrying forward the pupil to the possession of the various virtues which ought in early life to be cherished. Love of truth, justice, kindness, decision and firmness, courage, both physical and moral, filial affection, industry, are all to receive their *special* attention, and there are special plans appropriate to each. These particular topics, cannot however, in this first lecture on moral education before this body, be discussed. It is to be hoped that they will each hereafter receive a separate and thorough consideration, by being assigned to other hands. I will however before dismissing the subject describe a method which has been pursued with great advantage in my own and in some other schools. My pupils call it, from the day on which it occurs, the Saturday exercise. It was briefly described some months since in the Annals of Education.

Some subject of a moral nature is assigned, and at the appointed hour small strips of paper of uniform size are distributed among the scholars, upon which those who choose write a sentence or two relating to the subject in hand. One makes a remark,—another relates an anecdote,—a third asks a question,—a fourth states a fact,—and thus for ten minutes almost every pen is busy. These brief productions are then all collected, brought to me and read aloud, with such remarks upon each as may seem proper.

This method makes the teacher more fully acquainted with the condition of his school, and the real faults and temptations of his scholars than almost any other mode. Perhaps disobedience to parents is the subject. If so, disobedient acts of every possible variety are presented. Practices not before known to be prevalent, are mentioned by many independent writers. Deception at school may be the topic, and if the scholars have

before voted to be frank, and if the teacher, by his mildness of character and interest in his scholars, has secured their affection, almost every artful contrivance or subterfuge will be brought to view. Once I took bad management by teachers for the topic, inviting the pupils to scan my administration with the same severe scrutiny as that to which their conduct is subjected. The following list of topics which have come up in discussion in this way will show the extent to which the plan may be carried. Bad conduct at home. Generosity. Decision. Diffidence and forwardness. Management of younger brothers or sisters when intrusted to our care. Biting the nails, and plans to correct the habit. Order. Selfishness. Flattery. Games and plays. Quarrelling. It will be at once perceived that the catalogue might be carried to any extent among the list of vices and virtues—of traits of character and personal habits.

But I must bring these remarks abruptly to a close. No one would expect in a single lecture a full detail of the system of measures to be pursued to form the moral habits of the pupils of a school. If my remarks shall be the means of inducing those teachers, who have not hitherto made this a subject of direct attention, immediately to commence some plans for the accomplishment of this object, it is all which I can expect or desire. The work can only be advanced in various schools by the individual genius and skill of the teachers.

There must be in the generation which is to come upon the stage, a greater portion of social virtue than will come spontaneously, or the dangers which even now threaten our country will thicken into deeper and deeper gloom. To be mild and gentle in spirit, kind and conciliatory in temper and conduct, and submissive to proper authority, are not the natural characteristics of Americans. The stern unbending spirit of freedom which prevails in this land is with difficulty retained in union with the gentler and more peaceful virtues of social life. We must then earnestly exert ourselves to sustain the latter, or else this extended government over our immensely varied country



will soon become a very unstable equilibrium of the fierce elements of whirlwind and storm.

I ought not to close without saying that the superstructure of social virtue ought in my opinion to stand on the foundation of religious principle, by which I mean strong personal affection for the great Creator. This however is not the only foundation. The minds of our pupils may be influenced by love of excellence—by elevated and enlarged ideas of the superior happiness of virtue in this life,—and conscience may be so awakened, and its voice grow so strong, as to exert a most powerful control. These principles too can be brought much more easily to have influence in a school, than real, sincere, unaffected piety,—by which I mean *communion with the Supreme Being and love for him*. Moral education and religious education are therefore distinct, and it was the former subject which was assigned to me. I could not however close my remarks without expressing the sentiment which is unquestionably common to us all, that the members of the great human family will be most just and benevolent to each other, when they are bound most closely to their common father above.

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## LECTURE III.

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ON THE

### USEFULNESS OF LYCEUMS;

CONSIDERED IN CONNEXION WITH THE INFLUENCE OF THE COUNTRY

AND AGE IN WHICH WE LIVE,

ON THE CONDITION OF MAN AS AN INDIVIDUAL,

A MEMBER OF SOCIETY, A POLITICAL AGENT, AND AN INTEL-

LECTUAL AND MORAL BEING.

BY

S. C. PHILLIPS.

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This Lecture was originally delivered as introductory to the second course of lectures before the Salem Lyceum, on the occasion of opening their new Hall. It was afterwards delivered before the Lyceums in Charlestown, Newburyport and Danvers. It may be proper to add that it has been altered and enlarged since it was first prepared.

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## USEFULNESS OF LYCEUMS.

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GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE been honored by an invitation from your Directors to repeat a lecture which was prepared for another occasion, and a different audience. The occasion was one with which most of you have been elsewhere familiar ; and the audience was a portion of that intelligent and virtuous community, who honor you as their guides, while you rely upon them as your patrons. The subject of the lecture is not foreign to the design of the Institute ; and I state the circumstance to which I have alluded for the purpose of explaining my mode of treating it, if that shall seem more appropriate to a popular discussion, than to the form of address to which you have here been accustomed.

My design is to suggest for your consideration some of the opportunities and means of usefulness, which are placed within the reach of an association constituted and conducted like the Lyceum. Addressing common sense, and appealing to the observation and experience of every one who hears me, I hope to show that here has been opened a field of mutual instruction, where labor cannot lose its reward, and where judicious, persevering, and combined exertions will contribute to the great ends of personal, social, political, intellectual and moral improvement, to an extent commensurate with all proper wishes and reasonable expectations.

The Lyceum seeks to adapt itself to the circumstances of

the community in which it is established. It is an institution designed for this country and for the present age. It is our good fortune to live in a country and an age, in which the condition of man *as an individual, as a member of society, as a political agent, and as an intellectual and moral being* is exhibited in a striking aspect—involving new relations, conferring new trusts, and consequently implying singular responsibility and important duties. In reference to the object which has been stated, I propose to illustrate this view of the situation of each and all of us.

I. The condition of an individual in this country is peculiar, inasmuch as from the moment of his birth, there is no positive authority, not even the force of external circumstances, to compel him to confine himself to any particular pursuit, to cultivate any particular habits, or to assent to any particular opinions. In other words, the liberty of thinking and acting as an individual is as much his birth-right as his political liberty as a citizen. He opens his eyes to the light of Heaven, and while his consciousness assures him that he is a free-agent, he looks abroad upon the scene of good and evil which the world presents to his earliest gaze, and thanks God for the power that he feels within him to choose the one and refuse the other. He will soon perceive, that, as certainly as he possesses a mind and a heart, the regulation of his thoughts and feelings must depend upon himself; and that while he may derive benefit from the advice and example of others, it is not their office to mould his character and guide his course through life. He will learn, too, as soon as he acquires any practical wisdom, that the circumstances of his infancy bear no fixed relation to the destiny of his manhood; that he is in a community of equals, where the means of education are afforded to all, where the paths of industry and honor are alike open to all, where none can plead any other apology for ignominy than crime, or any better excuse for crime than folly. He will soon prove by his experience that whatever befalls him of success or misfortune, of happiness or misery, of honor or

disgrace, is, in a most important sense, the consequence of his own conduct. Born a pauper, he may thus die the possessor of millions—a farmer's boy, he may reach the highest station in the republic—with no external title to consideration, the treasures of his mind may be the richest legacy of the present age to posterity. On the other hand, with a fortune for his patrimony, he may sink to the level of the poorest day-laborer—graceful and accomplished, the pride of a proud family, the favorite of beauty, and the idol of fashion, he may perish without a friend, on a pallet of straw, in the garret of an almshouse; still more, blessed with the best gifts of nature, the best opportunities of education, the fairest prospects of usefulness—"bearing his blushing honors thick upon him"—he may live to see himself a reprobate and an outcast.

It is in this perfect liberty of making himself what he chooses to become, that our institutions confer upon the individual, or, rather, do not wrest from the individual, the highest prerogative of his nature—what may be rendered the greatest blessing of his existence, or will prove, by his own fault, the cause of his misery and ruin. An arbitrary government, on the contrary, prescribes not only an unequal distribution of political power, but, for most practical purposes, its effect is to counteract the influence of moral distinctions, to repress the tendencies of nature, and to doom individuals to penury or affluence, to offices of dependence or to elevated stations, not according to their merit, as tested by fair competition, but solely with reference to accidental circumstances. Thus the heir of a throne may be a profligate spendthrift and an abandoned libertine; and yet a mitred bishop shall place the crown upon his head, the laureate shall hymn his praises, and all ranks and classes implore blessings on his reign; while the poorest subject of his realm, however meritorious, is suffered to pass his life in wretchedness, and to end it in despair. Thus, too, talents combined with learning and integrity, may only render a plebeian odious and suspicious, while a moderate share of these distinctions will raise a patrician to the pinnacle of fame,

or, perhaps, the utter want of them will constitute the chief qualification of a prime minister or a pensioned favorite.

Examples of such moral outrage are becoming rare. The spirit of our institutions, already diffused far and wide, has aroused individuals to a perception of what is due to talents and character, as well as nations to a sense of their political rights ; so that now merit is every where emerging from obscurity, and worthlessness retreating from the stations, where it had so long withstood the public frown. But it is still easy to perceive, that, wherever absolute establishments, whether civil or religious, exist, the individual may struggle in vain to acquire the influence and estimation, which amongst us to deserve is to possess.

The age, too, as well as the country in which we live, is propitious to self-improvement. So far as public opinion does not cringe to the power that would overawe, nor is seduced by the flattery that would debase it, there is nothing more honorable or more honored than individual exertion, in any and every department of usefulness. There never was a period in the history of human improvement, when so much was attempted or effected by the labors of individuals. In science, in literature, and in the arts, conspicuous examples of arduous efforts and encouraging success adorn the present age. Many an individual of our times, believing with Sir William Jones that whatever had been attained was attainable by him, has burst the chains of prejudice, has conquered difficulties, has withstood temptations, has acquired habits of self-control and self-application, and has persevered to the accomplishment of all that ambition could virtuously desire, and earned a fame which posterity will venerate.

Individual competition is the most powerful incentive to exertion ; at the present day how vastly enlarged is the field of its exercise ! From the extension of commerce, and by means of the press, every event, every discovery, every experiment, every plausible undertaking of every individual in any one civilized country is speedily published in every other. Inquiry

is excited—criticism becomes active—every thing is brought to the test of philosophical analysis and practical proof—defects are exposed—improvements are suggested—ignorance is rebuked—sophistry is refuted—useful inventions are scattered—useful knowledge is diffused—discovery treads on the heels of discovery—and while each individual scarcely finds himself without a rival, he perceives the wisdom of converting rivalry into a source of encouragement and confidence.

It is thus that individuals throughout the world, are at the present moment stimulating each other forward in the race of true glory. It is by this wide-spread emulation that they are brought to realize their various powers, and the unprecedented means of influence which are placed within their reach. The striking events, fresh in the memory of the present generation, what are they but the efforts of individuals, roused to action by powerful motives within and without them, and exhibiting throughout their career of wild ambition or virtuous self-devotion, in their merits and in their faults, the indelible impression alike of the times and of the men? I do not mean to say that it is the only praise of Napoleon that he was the great man of great occasions; but it is to hazard little to assert that he did homage to the spirit of the age in his institutions—that whatever is laudable in his taste, his ambition, his designs, and his achievements, bears the character of the age—and that it is the severest censure of his errors to pronounce them a libel on the age. Elevated by extraordinary events to the height of military glory—possessing as an individual the greatest power for good or evil which was ever allotted to a mortal—he seemed, as if incapable of moral perception, to shut his eyes to the prospect of brilliant usefulness which the world saw spread before him, and rushed in madness and in folly to the consummation of his earthly destiny, leaving it for biography to unveil his motives, and for history to record his crimes.

"He left the name, at which the world grew pale

"To point a moral, and adorn a tale."



In respect to the recent revolution in France, what does it illustrate so strikingly as the atrocious stupidity of one individual, the fugitive and almost forgotten monarch, and the unanimity, the wisdom, the disinterestedness, the exalted patriotism of another individual, the brightest living example of the glorious distinctions of our country and of the age? Here has been a notable proof that the rank of a king can no longer screen the guilt of the individual, and that an individual may refuse a crown, and yet exert a greater influence over government and people, than was ever yielded to the arms or diplomacy of allied sovereigns.

Perhaps the sequel of this Revolution will strikingly show, that from the want of other individuals like Lafayette, that is, from the want of individuals whose opinions have been moulded, whose habits have been formed, whose hopes have been excited, whose very taste has been inspired by a political system such as Lafayette contributed to establish, by a train of circumstances such as those by which he was surrounded, and by examples such as he witnessed in America, what has been already gained in France may be recklessly and shamelessly lost. Can any thing be more plain, than that in France the project of "a republican king" has been proved as great an absurdity in fact, as it was declared to be in terms? Under the present constitution of the government, has any evil become more apparent, than its incompatibility with the advancement or even the political security of individuals, in whom more than any others the country has had occasion to manifest its confidence, and upon whom it is anxious to bestow its honors?

At the time of the first delivery of this lecture, the French Revolution was but just achieved. It was hailed here as well as in France as a successful triumph of the popular will. Lafayette had been seen to re-assume his commanding station at the head of the National Guard. Having gained alike the

ear of the king and the hearts of the people, generously, ardently, and sincerely devoted to the promotion of their mutual interests, it seemed as if neither could soon or ever become so far insensible to the value of his services, as to seek to detract aught from his standing or his fame. But notwithstanding the Revolution, the government of France continued hostile to republican principles and a republican policy; and for obvious reasons the presence, the advice, the entreaties, the remonstrances of their vigilant guardian and faithful champion soon became as obnoxious to Louis Philippe as to Charles the Tenth. It was not for Lafayette to degrade or dishonor himself. It was not for him to play the part of a sycophant and courtier. He could not but regard the king as equally with himself the servant of a common sovereign, the people; and as owing like himself the highest personal and official allegiance to the constitution which they had both subscribed, and to the liberal principles, which they had pledged themselves to each other to support. It was for Lafayette again to experience that it was in vain for him to attempt to be an American in France. It was for him, as I may say, to instruct us most impressively, that it is in vain, and worse than in vain, any where out of America, for an individual to trust himself as a political reformer to the purity of his motives, the weight of his character, and the lustre of his fame. Lafayette had but recently come to America; and here, from village to village, from city to city, from state to state, he had been accosted by the throng of free and happy citizens, who were ready and eager to honor him as the friend of their fathers, and the disciple of their Washington. He came here in his old age to witness the success of the cause, for which he had sacrificed the blood and treasure of his youth; and he returned to France re-animated with the hope of doing something at least, that might prepare the way for establishing in the land of his birth the political system, which he had seen thus richly blessing the country of his adoption. The popular feeling in France responded to his design; and the precipitous self-destruction

the last of the Bourbons afforded an occasion which was all that he could have wished. The feelings of Lafayette revolted from deeds of violence. He desired a peaceful revolution. At the head of the army and of the people, he does not appear to have conceived a single purpose of ambition. The good of his country, the example of America, were the engrossing topics of his contemplations. He saw, or he was persuaded to believe that he saw insuperable obstacles to the erection of a republic upon the ruins of a monarchy. He was conciliated by the acts of liberality and patriotism which had acquired for the Duke of Orleans and his son so large a share of public favor. He was induced to hope, that even if the power of a monarchy were entrusted to such hands, under the guardianship of constitutional restraints, the people of France might enjoy an undisturbed equality of personal rights, and have an opportunity of preparing themselves for the unlimited exercise of political privileges.

With such a purpose, it is not too much to say that Lafayette conducted Louis Philippe to the constitutional throne, and placed himself by its side, its sworn supporter. But Louis Philippe found it more easy to be a king than a republican. Nor was he slow to perceive that the feelings and habits of those around him had hardly changed with the change of government, and that, if he could relieve himself from the oversight of Lafayette, it might not be difficult to procure a general assent to all that was necessary to secure a virtual recognition of the ancient prerogatives of the crown.

Lafayette has submitted to the masked policy of the king with evident disappointment. But although dismissed from the service of the king, he is retained in the service of the people. He is still the individual, to whom all eyes will be again directed in the hour of peril, and who cannot be divested of a personal influence which Louis Philippe well may envy, and for which he may have cause to tremble.

Let it not, then, be forgotten, in estimating the character and services of Lafayette, that his education, his principles, his

taste, his feelings are purely and eminently American—that in honoring him we but honor ourselves and our institutions—and that we may safely and proudly refer to him as an example of the influence of our country and age upon the character and condition of the individual. Let us attribute to the want of others like himself, rather than to any want of principle or exertion on his part, the doubtful result of the existing political arrangements. Let us hope, that, through his influence and under the guidance of an enlightened patriotism the work of reform may be completed without the recurrence of scenes and events, which have been recorded in letters of blood in a preceding chapter of the history of France.

If then, it be one of the blessings of our country and age that each individual is entrusted with a power of distinction and usefulness of incalculable efficiency; if the highest public honors and dearest private comforts are here alike accessible to all; if the influence and fame of an individual may now be circulated throughout the civilized world; if the examples of the present day serve to show the pre-eminence which may be attained, how important is it that every individual amongst us should understand his responsibility and his duties? So far from his situation in life being fixed by its original circumstances, nothing can be more certain than that it is not fixed, and that he must rise above it or become degraded, accordingly as he improves his opportunities or abuses his privileges. The means of improvement are liberally supplied; they consist in whatever will tend to exercise his faculties, to strengthen his mind, and to elevate and adorn his character.

I hold it to be a positive benefit of the Lyceum that individuals voluntarily associate for the single purpose of mutual improvement—that all distinctions except those of individual merit, are unknown—that the object is to communicate instruction to each individual—and that the individual is compelled in a measure to task his powers, to test his proficiency, to ascertain and supply his defects, to compare himself with others, and by such comparison to learn to do justice to their

pretensions, and to realize his own claims, advantages, and obligations. At the Lyceum he beholds a spectacle, which could not be exhibited, except in such a country and such an age. He finds assembled on terms of equality, and in a spirit of mutual respect, all classes, all ages and both sexes. He listens to speakers, who proceed from and return to the ranks of hearers, and who are themselves taught by teaching. He finds others thus capable of imparting, and himself capable of acquiring the greatest variety of useful and entertaining knowledge. He studies the examples of intellectual and moral worth, of literary proficiency, of mechanical ingenuity, of practical usefulness in all forms which are presented for his imitation. He beholds with delight the phenomena of the external world rendered intelligible by ocular demonstrations. He surveys, also, the world within. He sees, he feels the power of mind. He is induced to reflection. He resolves upon action. His ambition becomes purified as it is elevated: and the whole effect of circumstances is to contribute to the happiest result.

Of how many individuals has the fact been recorded, that their early connexion with associations, approaching in a greater or less degree to the character and design of the Lyceum, has contributed more than any other incidental cause, to the growth and development of their natural endowments! I will refer to two of the most illustrious instances of our times—Henry Brougham and Henry Clay. The former while but nineteen years of age, laid the foundation of his reputation in a brilliant effort before the Debating Society of Edinburgh, which has also proved the favorite forum for the display of the youthful talents of many of his most distinguished contemporaries. The latter rose to fame under similar auspices; it was in yielding to a sudden impulse at the meeting of a debating club in Lexington that he was enabled to overcome the timidity and embarrassment which had elsewhere oppressed him, and first exhibited the evidence of his extraordinary powers of oratory. The former may now be seen proud to descend from the summit of political preferment to honor with his presence

the ordinary meetings of the "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," and devoting his official leisure to literary labor for the promotion of its objects. The latter is known as the unwearied advocate of the most practical schemes of popular improvement and social benevolence. Of both these individuals the truth cannot be too often told that they are the ornaments of the most enlightened age and of the freest countries in the world; and this truth will not be properly appreciated, unless it is considered that to the circumstances connected with the time and places of their birth they have mainly owed their reputation and usefulness. In no other country of Europe, and at no preceding period of the history of England, would Henry Brougham have been permitted even to acquire notoriety; and no where but in America, and never until now could services like those of Henry Clay in the cause of liberty, of patriotism, and of philanthropy, have been conceived, attempted, and accomplished.

How instructive are the examples of such men, as, apart from political connexions, and for the single object which has been proposed, we may be permitted to regard them! Born in obscurity, bred in seclusion, by dint of the severest exertions of the highest faculties of the mind, they have been seen to advance, as it were, *pari passu*, to the proudest distinctions of forensic and parliamentary eminence; attracting to themselves the notice and admiration, not of their own countries only, but of the civilized world, and inscribing their fame, not in the perishing memories of a contemporaneous generation, but in institutions which will outlive centuries, in systems of policy which will constitute the land-marks of national greatness, and in a written eloquence which will be treasured in every language that future ages will delight to esteem classical! How instructive are the examples of such men, when their biographers point us to the incidents of their early life; and show the powerful influence of their connexion with an institution like the Lyceum in fixing the bent, or at least in

quicken the development of the latent genius, of which they had been till then the unconscious possessors !

It is not for us to expect that the Lyceum will be instrumental in producing many such instances of intellectual proficiency ; but it cannot be a vain hope, that in the bosom of every community there may be talents and virtues, neither confined to age, nor rank, nor sex, which will be roused to exertion and brought into notice through its direct and indirect operations. It cannot be a vain hope, that individuals under similar circumstances will apply to themselves all the motives, and will feel that they have a right to claim for themselves all the encouragements, which the highest examples are suited to impart. It surely cannot be a vain hope that they will learn from their experience that the effort to improve is improvement ; that the presence of others is an unfailing incentive to exertion ; that there is no limit to the humblest capacity, but that the mind, by the aid of contingents which will render it active, vigorous, and expanded, may prove to every individual the source of immeasurable usefulness, honor, and happiness.

II. Society being composed of individuals, it follows that whatever tends to elevate or depress the condition of the individual, must produce a corresponding influence upon society. The accidental circumstances, which constitute the rank of the individual without reference to his merit, control society in a greater or less degree in every country but our own ; and, again, society is every where characterized by advantages and wants peculiar to the age, which deserve consideration.

'The nobility,' and 'the gentry,' titles of the highest classes in Europe, are with us, in their specific application, terms of derision. We sometimes imagine a nobility of nature, when we pay homage to intellectual greatness, and we commend the strictness of principles and propriety of manners that are the professed characteristics of accomplished gentlemen. We have been accustomed to attach sufficient importance to wealth. We seek to multiply the forms of refinement. We doat upon luxuries. We suffer ourselves to be hurried into the excesses

of fashion. We have our great men and our higher classes. We discriminate between styles of living. We speak contemptuously of the great vulgar, and the little vulgar. There are those who deprecate the influence of an aristocracy, and others who live in terror of a mob. And yet, notwithstanding these seeming imitations of foreign manners, and customs, and caprices, and follies, there is nothing amongst us more truly American, than, if I may so denominate them, the principles of society. When, therefore, I say that we deride hereditary titles of nobility, and ridicule those who profess to have been born gentlemen, I mean only that we are true to the spirit of our institutions, which inculcate natural equality, and prompt us to treat all assumptions of this sort as preposterous. And when I refer to the disposition which evidently exists amongst us to adopt foreign fashions, manners and prejudices, I do it for the sake of showing by these very examples (as painters resort to caricature, in their sketches of society), how completely they have here failed to produce the effects that give to them all their value abroad.

Upon this point it is wise to rely upon observation and experience. Show me the instance in which the attempt has been made to appropriate wealth to the gratification of what is styled a taste for luxury, and elegance, and high life, in which the result has not proved that the short-sighted novice has totally misunderstood his own interests and also public sentiment. Abroad he may have witnessed that a splendid establishment is not only an agreeable but a necessary appendage of rank and fortune; but he commits a fatal error if he does not perceive that here its only effect will be to lessen his influence, to empty his purse, and, in the end, to turn him upon the community, of which he had vainly thought himself independent, abject and disconsolate. Show me the instance, in which the affectation of superiority of any sort, whether leaning upon wealth, or family connexions, or personal accomplishments, has not terminated in mortification and disgrace. Show me what, after all, fashion has ever gained for its delud-



ed votary, beyond perhaps, the momentary gaze of a passing admirer, or hasty and heartless friendship succeeded by cold and lasting neglect ; or what effect it has produced upon the character, other than the extinction of natural delicacy, and a fastidious disregard of true moral refinement. Extend your recollection throughout the range of your acquaintance and point me, if you can, to a single instance, where external circumstances alone have secured consideration, respect, and influence without abatement or without reverses. I am happy thus to infer from what I believe to be the uniform testimony of facts, that the factitious distinctions which prevail abroad, exist here, only, as it were, to demonstrate the absurdity of their pretensions. I am still more happy to believe, that they are gradually yielding to enlightened views of real life and of our proper condition.

What, is it asked, are the principles of society on which we are dependent ? Fortunately, be it answered, it is not so much for us to adopt, as to recognize them. They are engrafted upon our institutions. They are the cement of the political fabric. They are to be traced in the example of our ancestors. They enter into our opinions, feelings, and habits. They adhere to us through all changes. We lean upon them in adversity, and in the height of prosperity we find it in vain to attempt to rise above them. They are to be learned by observation and experience.

We have classes in our society ; and it is easy to foresee that we must always have them. But tell me, from what you see and know, how are they constituted ? Perhaps you will be inclined to answer, that the first class comprises the rich, the learned, and the fashionable. Such is the common impression ; but this description is by far too general. There are rich men, respectable and respected, who adorn high stations ; there are also rich men, despicable and despised, who have sunk into the lowest. Learning often confers upon its possessor undying honors ; it has sometimes served to immortalize his infamy. All classes pay more or less deference to

fashion ; the shameless wanton may be the most fashionable of her sex. Perceiving the necessity of being more minute, you will now tell me, that our first class consists of those who do not pervert wealth and learning, and who only defer to fashion according to their circumstances, from a willingness to obey universal custom, and never in violation of good sense and decorum. The description is more satisfactory, but it is still imperfect. Who are the rich men and the learned men, that fill high places in society ? They are known to us, thus far, only as those, who do not abuse wealth and learning. How do they use these supposed distinctions, and how have they acquired them ? Inquire into the history of such as must occur to your recollection, and tell me if I am not right in saying that they are memorable instances of industry, perseverance, economy, temperance and honesty, struggling against obstacles, and gradually attaining to the elevation which is accorded to them by general consent, in consideration of their talents, the extent of their influence, and the benefit of their example. Am I not right in saying that a large proportion of those, who now constitute, and who have always constituted the highest class of our society have had their origin in the lowest ? Am I not right in saying that our richest merchants owe their wealth to their own exertions, and that the most distinguished members of the learned professions have earned their reputation by the daily and nightly toil of successive years ? Am I not right in saying that they can maintain their standing only so long as they maintain their principles, and apply their means of usefulness to proper ends ? Am I not further right in saying, that their acquisitions, at their death, are beyond their disposal, that a large fortune distributed amongst heirs is usually scattered to the winds, and that the treasures of learning can only satisfy the avarice of the mind ?

The organization of the first class of our society, then, has reference as much to the respectability and usefulness of the individuals who compose it, as to their wealth and learning.

Wealth or learning they are likely to possess ; because, apart from prejudice, it is plain that these are the ordinary results of human exertions, as directed to different pursuits, and when justly appreciated and properly used, they imply the substantial comforts and proper ornaments of life.

I have said that our society will ever be divided into classes, and I have referred to what must be regarded as the only permanent distinctions of the highest class. It ought further to be remarked that the constitution of one class is the constitution of every other—that they are only distinguished by different degrees of attainment—that they propose the same objects of pursuit—that no barrier is interposed between them—but that, like the arrangement of guests at the table of Cyrus, merit is promoted from the lowest grades, while imbecility, indolence, folly and vice are constantly receding from the highest. I repeat it, there is none so low in the lowest class, that he may not raise himself to honorable distinction ; there is none so high in the highest, as to be secure from degradation, if he stoop to infamy. This is the alchymy which converts the meanest substances into gold, and which detects alloy in the most glittering metals. These are the principles which are at work in all the changes that we witness and experience, and which lie at the foundation of society as it exists with us. “It is in England,” says Sir Richard Steele, “come into our very language as a propriety of distinction, to say, when we would speak of persons to their advantage—*they are people of condition.*” In America, none can deserve, or should desire higher praise, than to have it said of them—*they are people of merit.*

The relation of classes in our society deserves to be further considered. Here, as elsewhere, the progress of society is indicated by the degree of advancement of the higher class ; but it should be remembered, that here, not as elsewhere, the advancement of the higher class depends altogether upon the improvement of the lower.

In Europe, refinement is co-existent with barbarism ; it

being in the nature of her institutions that the extreme of luxury should meet the extreme of want, and that those only should be admitted into high life, who are born in the midst of it. Property and rank are secured to the possessors during life, while the laws of entail and primogeniture provide for their transmission. In this manner a permanent aristocracy is established, which can exist only by virtue of its independence of the great mass of the population; and which will seek to maintain its independence by monopolizing the influences of wealth, knowledge, and even religion. Society is forced to accommodate itself to institutions thus reared and thus sustained. It is "divided horizontally." The upper class becomes such by birth; and the political design is to keep it uppermost by placing within its reach, and by placing beyond the reach of the lower class all social as well as political advantages. It is thus, as I think we may see clearly, that, under every government except our own, the superiority of one class depends upon the inferiority of the other; and that the permanent separation of the two classes is sought to be maintained, as it can only be maintained, by super-adding to political restraints the influence of all the causes that affect the improvement of individuals and society. Such a policy is opposed to reason, and is an offence against nature; and, sooner or later, reason and nature, enabling men to understand their rights, and prompting them to feel their wrongs, by those mighty revulsions, which have so often shaken government and society to their foundations, restore the equilibrium alike essential to political and social harmony.

In our country such a revulsion (not so violent as elsewhere, because preceded by a gradual amelioration), has resulted in a political and social system precisely the reverse of that which has been described. This system is founded in opposite principles; it proposes a different end, and therefore requires a resort to different means. So far from rendering the great body of the people politically powerless, it recognizes the people at large as the rightful possessors of all political power; and so

far from attempting to regulate society, contrary to reason and nature, for the benefit of a part, it leaves society to regulate itself, according to reason and nature, for the benefit of the whole. Conforming to the analogy of nature, while it gathers fruit and flowers from the branches which are above, it proceeds upon the principle that the branches which are above can only grow from the root which is below. Sowing the seeds of improvement every where beneath the surface of society, and to a greater or less depth accordingly as they are designed to rise to a greater or less height, it leaves them exposed to the common influences of the light of knowledge and the vital air of freedom, which, by the law of such a system, must be universally diffused. The seeds being various, their growth and functions will be various; but still, true to nature, the system causes such variety to result in mutual dependence, and the imperfection, which constitutes the dependence of each part, to contribute to the perfection of the whole. The oak supports the ivy—the ivy adorns the oak; and while the giant of the forest, “upreared from the lowest depths,” spreads his broad arms to hail the sunshine and to grapple with the storm, he affords a quiet shelter and a peaceful shade to such as neither rise so high nor sink so low, but yet proceed from the same earth, and point upward to the same heaven. Our society, therefore, while it discards absurd and artificial distinctions, retains those which are reasonable and natural. It admits and requires the most minute classification; but it makes each class essential to every other, and relies upon the lowest to sustain and balance all that are above it. To use another metaphor, it seeks to rear in the human desert a pyramid of social happiness, which shall exhibit the perfection of political skill and moral taste, and must therefore be constructed, upon the true principle of architecture, that the elevation of the summit shall bear a fixed proportion to the expansion of the base.

The object of other systems, as has been seen, is, by force of law and prescription, to secure to one class of society the ex-

clusive and permanent possession of external advantages. Our system, on the contrary, does not interpose any political barrier against the innumerable vicissitudes, to which it is the obvious design of nature that all classes of society, all human beings, should be ever and every where exposed. With us, it may be asserted in the broadest sense, neither law nor prescription have established any land-marks; and so resistless is the tide of revolution in every sphere of society, that there is practically nothing constant but change. In this view, while exposed to so many vicissitudes, while no reliance can be placed on external circumstances, how much does it become us to multiply those social employments and enjoyments, in which all classes may participate, and to which we may cling, with increasing satisfaction, amidst the alternations of prosperity and adversity, that are here the common lot!

The Lyceum is adapted to the condition of our society. Its doors are open to all. Its objects are interesting to all. Its success must be beneficial to all. It calls together all who wish to improve themselves. It renders them instrumental in the improvement of others. It seeks the good of society by diffusing correct sentiments, liberal feelings, and useful knowledge. It recognizes no distinctions, it creates none but those of intellectual and moral worth. Who does not perceive that at its weekly meetings society assumes a different form from any which in our community is elsewhere exhibited? Here is none of the extravagant display of fashion; a worthier object attracts notice and excites admiration. Here is no excess of luxury; it is incompatible with rational entertainment. Here, on the other hand, is no vulgar sport; the passion for it is extinguished. Here there need be no want of refinement; whatever adorns the character is inspired, fostered, and honored. Here is no arena for political strife or religious controversy; the Lyceum is dedicated to the single object in which all sects and parties may cordially concur. While the characteristic animosities, follies, and vices of all classes are excluded by the avowed purposes of the institution, whatever is estima-

ble and virtuous in any one class is readily associated with kindred traits in other classes; and thus while in fact each class is drawn hither by the impulse of a common desire for improvement, all are gradually led to acquire a common taste, a common sympathy, and a common attachment. Is there not here presented a bright combination of social attractions, and a wide scope for the influence of the best principles and the best affections? Who has not experienced that social improvement and enjoyment are blended upon such occasions? Who has not learned to think more seriously of his social obligations, and to correct his sentiments and feelings in regard to others, towards whom he had suffered himself to cherish unkind prejudices, habitual aversion, or, it may be, a mistaken resentment?

The leading interests of society are to be here studied, discussed, illustrated, and explained. The arts which supply our wants, multiply our comforts, and embellish our external condition—the sciences which lie at the foundation of these arts—the sentiments and habits which fix the standard of public opinion, and give the tone to public morals—whatever concerns us in the intercourse of the world—these are subjects which must constantly recur in lectures and discussions. Practical information, judicious suggestions, seasonable hints, striking views of common relations and duties will thus serve to fill up and enliven the hours which we pass here, and will enable us to go back to our firesides and the ordinary walks of life better fitted for the employments, and with a purer relish for the enjoyments that await us there.

III. I am next to speak of the political rights and privileges, and corresponding obligations and duties of American citizens at the present day.

We have undertaken to govern ourselves. We have chosen to retain in the hands of the many the power, which, whenever entrusted to the few, has been converted into tyranny. We bow to the will of the people as the supreme law.

We trust to public opinion to protect our rights, to promote our interests, to cure evils, to avert dangers. While abroad, the administration of government can hardly be changed without violent commotion; anarchy and bloodshed, we effect quiet revolutions at the ballot-box in the election of every new Governor and President. We repose beneath the standard of civil and religious liberty, and we offer to the oppressed of all nations a safe asylum and a cordial welcome. We cling to our institutions after an experiment of more than a half-century, and we contemplate results flattering to our national pride. We hesitate no longer to believe that our system is practicable; and while we are not unmindful of present evils and future dangers, we rely upon the ability of the people to work out their political salvation, even, if it must be, at critical periods, with fear and trembling.

How unpretending and yet how effective, how simple and yet how perfect is our form of government! It proceeds from the people, it depends upon the people; and yet, for all necessary objects, it controls and restrains the people far more effectually than the most rigid despotism. It was founded in open defiance of the majesty of a king; it subsists by enforcing submission to the majesty of law. At a period like the present, when its garrisons are deserted—when no military force is visible—when its officers of all grades are mingled in the mass of population—when the press publishes with boldness, nay even with effrontery, the views and purposes of every party, the opinions, suggestions and insinuations of every individual, it exerts a power, which, the less it is seen, the more it is felt, and which, identified with public opinion, is supported by the very freedom, that, if it were constituted like any other government, would serve to overthrow it. How true is it, that the devices by which every other government is sustained, could only have the effect to endanger our own! A standing army is an object of terror, not to the enemies, but to the friends of our institutions; to subject the press to a censorship were to kindle a political volcano; and to separate the officers of



government into a distinct and permanent class, were, by this very act, to divest them of their authority.

If the perfection of our government consists in its simplicity, its security results from the complex distribution of its powers. It was formerly decried as a many-headed monster. Time has shown that the greatest political monster is a government which has but a single head, and must fall a victim to the weakness or madness of an individual. Experience has proved that it is only where laws are framed by the deliberations of many heads, and are administered by many hands, they can secure the approbation of many hearts; and it is a maxim as old as the oldest government, that heartless obedience is incipient rebellion.

Without detracting from the manifest wisdom of the founders of our system, it is clear that it is indebted for many of its advantages to the circumstances under which it was established. It was most fortunate, that, before the adoption of the Federal Constitution, there existed several distinct states, previously provinces, who, although they had become convinced of the necessity of a general government to concentrate their resources, to render efficient the means of military protection, to provide a permanent and uniform revenue, to regulate commerce, and to superintend foreign relations, had also learned that the executive, legislature and judiciary of each state were sufficient and most suitable for the management of its particular concerns. It was fortunate, also, that towns and plantations should have had a separate existence before the establishment of the provincial governments. The most effectual mode of administering municipal affairs was thus ascertained, which has been wisely preserved, in a great measure, in its original simplicity. Our union, vast as it has become in population and resources, is but an aggregate of divisions and subdivisions of power, combined, if I may so say, upon a principle of political induction.

Consider, for a moment, one of the principal divisions—the State of Massachusetts. Our citizens are reared in towns, which provide schools for their childhood, which maintain asylums

for the poor, which protect the public peace and the public health, and which, in short, adopt and enforce all necessary and wholesome police regulations. Here, even in this limited sphere, are appropriately blended the legislative, executive, and judicial functions, as exercised respectively by the primary assemblies of the people, the selectmen and co-ordinate authorities, and the justices of the peace. Towns are arranged into counties; and we have county magistrates, to whom are committed the care of roads and prisons, the probate of wills, the registry of deeds, and sundry financial and semi-judicial trusts. The next and crowning jurisdiction is the government of the State, complete in its organization, and devoted, in its separate departments, to the enactment, interpretation and execution of the laws, which are required to protect rights of person and property, to secure equal and proper privileges, and to advance the interests of learning, virtue and piety. The Supreme Executive power, guarded from abuse by positive limitations, is vested in a governor, who is surrounded by responsible advisers. The legislature is divided into two branches, with a negative upon each other, and clothed with the appropriate functions of a deliberative assembly. The judicial tribunals, arranged with reference to the necessity and importance of their services, are connected with juries, who share with them the sacred trust of dispensing prompt and substantial justice. With the exception of judicial officers, who hold their stations for an obvious reason by a different tenure, these various functionaries are created by periodical elections, and are thereby held to a strict accountability for their public acts. At these elections, every citizen, who is not a pauper or a criminal, is entitled to exercise the right of suffrage, and is moreover eligible, with slight limitations, to every office in the gift of the people. Every citizen, also, who enjoys the privilege of an elector, is liable, unless specially excused, to perform the duty of a juror. It is thus that a large portion of the citizens are for the time being incumbents of the various offices of the town, county, and state; and, from the effect of rotation, hardly an

individual is released from devoting his talents and a portion of his time to the public service. The State, again, as a member of the union, is obliged to send its senators and representatives to Congress, and to answer all the calls that may be made upon its citizens, from the other civil and also the military and naval departments of the general government. Massachusetts is but one of twenty four states, and so similar is the internal organization throughout them all, that the political rights, privileges and duties of the citizens of the several states are, as nearly as may be, equal. As the national territory is extended, and population increases, so far from infringing the original system, it is only necessary to create new states, which become at once the favored members of a growing and happy family. Indeed, what is there more gratifying, amidst all our bright prospects, than to see our republic gaining strength and unity as it advances in power and prosperity—the tree of liberty more firmly rooted in its native soil, as it sends forth new and vigorous shoots from the parent stock !

If then, by the provisions of our system, political power is so distributed, that every citizen may be expected to share in its exercise while he submits to its authority, how important is it that all should acquire, as far as they may, the necessary qualifications for the discharge of civil trusts ? Apart from common learning, of which but few among us are destitute, and moral and religious principle, which is the only pledge of integrity, there are acquisitions in political science, in the principles of law, in the practice of legislation, in history, in statistics, in technology, invaluable in their uses to all who are officially required to consult and promote the public welfare, and not without interest to the retired observer of passing events. As it respects the business of making roads, the simplest department of public labor, there are none, probably, who possess the art by instinct ; and there are not many, perhaps, who have learned so much by observation and experience, that they might not be benefitted by a little study of a subject, which has employed the pens of sensible and judicious writers. In

the pauper system, how many abuses might have been prevented, and how much economy introduced, and, most of all, how much might its benefits have been extended, could it have been made the subject of thorough investigation and free discussion, and could even the statistical details, which have been collected without any uniform aim or method by disconnected inquirers, have been properly submitted for public consideration? In the management of prisons, what shocking errors, offensive to the judgment and excruciating to the feelings, were tolerated for years without seeking for a remedy, while, within a recent period, the mere business of inquiry, conducted by a single individual, has led to improvements that change the character of penitentiary discipline? In respect to public schools, how much is constantly to be gained by inquiry and the comparison of opinions?

To pass to subjects of State legislation, how numerous are the topics on which information should be sought and may easily be acquired by all who strive to qualify themselves for the duties which so many are ready to assume? The provisions of the constitution, often deserving of serious consideration in reference to proposed amendments—a system of finance, or the wisest method of imposing equal burthens—the extent to which laws should be carried to enforce the fulfilment of contracts, and for the punishment of crimes—the banking system, its complex operations, its tendency to irregularity, and the best mode of rendering it compatible with the public security—the system of licences, in regard to which such vague notions and irregular practices yet prevail—the scope and policy of internal improvements, comprehending so many novel applications of art and science, and such a variety of private and public, temporary and permanent interests—but it were vain to pursue this catalogue. It were still more vain to attempt to refer to the still more numerous objects which must engage his attention, who released from the duties connected with the administration of the affairs of the town, county and State, is summoned to deliberate upon the multiplied interests

and vast concerns of the country at large. Suffice it to say that even these, in all their extent, deserve, when he has leisure to bestow on them, the attentive consideration of every patriotic citizen. I will only say, further, that in addition to the necessity of proper qualifications in all who hold offices, when it is considered how every thing under our government depends upon the purity of elections, upon the discreet and sober exercise of the elective franchise, and upon the firmness, intelligence and integrity of jurors, there is no language that can express the importance or over-state the duty of spreading far and wide, wherever our free citizens are found, the means of necessary information, without which they will strive in vain to discharge the trust, for which the living world and future ages hold them accountable. Information so various and extensive, but few can acquire in schools or from books, and it is only by social intercourse and mutual instruction that it can successfully and most profitably be imparted.

Let the Lyceum be devoted to this as one of its leading objects. While the ardor of patriotism glows in every breast, let a continued effort to qualify ourselves for public usefulness in whatever sphere our services may be acceptable and our circumstances will permit us to render them, attest the purity of our zeal. While we rejoice in the flattering prospects of our country, when, as now, the curtain has not been lifted from the dark side of the picture, let us remember that these prospects are to be realized but upon one hard condition—that we resolve, each for himself, to be worthy of the country, and to devote mind and body, heart and soul, to the acquisition of knowledge, that we may understand our duties, and of virtue, which alone can supply the ability or even the disposition to perform them.

When it is considered that the members of a Lyceum come together as a promiscuous assemblage of citizens with no other object than that of mutual instruction in all that refers to their mutual interests, I ask you what occasion can be afforded more suitable for the dissemination of information upon the

various political topics, that are more or less directly involved in the various civil relations, which it is the privilege and duty of all ranks and classes of the American people to sustain and exercise? How much is each individual in every community compelled to feel the want of a familiar acquaintance with political subjects of common interest, which it is in the power of some other individual promptly and amply to supply? How much may be done at the Lyceum, to spread before our people collectively correct information of the progress of political events at home and abroad, which comparatively few among them have the leisure or opportunity to obtain from books or even newspapers? How easily may they be here instructed, from time to time, in whatever relates to their municipal affairs, and the more important designs and measures of the State and national governments? What an opportunity is thus presented of exhibiting, in the simplest details, the diversified resources, whether natural or acquired, local or universal, immediate or contingent, of which, under the auspices of a republican policy, intelligence, enterprise and industry may avail themselves? How easy may it be, in the form of lectures and discussions, to collect and compare the important facts and considerations, which enter into every question affecting the public welfare, whether in reference to our domestic or foreign interests? How easy, too, how interesting and how proper will it be, in the presence of such an audience as is collected at every Lyceum, to refresh the recollection of the prominent scenes and incidents, which illustrate the memorable epochs in our national history? How grateful will it be to recount the services, to portray the characters, and thus to present for imitation the examples of public benefactors? Above all, in view of such occasions of direct communication with the great body of the people, how much may and should be done, by appealing to the recollections of the past, the benefits of the present, and the hopes of the future, to impress still more and more deeply and widely a conviction of the incalculable value of that blessed UNION, which consummated the

toils and crowned the patriotic aspirations of our forefathers, and which is the only suitable legacy that we, as Americans, can bequeath to our prosperity?

How much, indeed, may be done at the Lyceum, which has been done no where else, to explain to the people the nature and relations of political rights and duties, to inculcate the principles of political morality, and to counteract by an indirect, and for that reason, perhaps, more powerful influence, the petty intrigues and sinister designs of selfish, turbulent and deluded partizans? How much may be done at the Lyceum, which has been done no where else, to induce and enable our fellow-citizens more and more to exercise their dispassionate judgment and sober good sense in the disposal of their electoral suffrages?

It will not be the effect of the Lyceum, for it is not the effect of increased intelligence, to destroy diversity of sentiment, and to put an end to political divisions; but it may be hoped that its benign tendency will be to render such divisions less inveterate, less acrimonious, and less dangerous. When the great body of our people shall have rendered themselves so intelligent and virtuous as never to conduct nor suffer themselves to be treated as a mob—when they shall have sufficient confidence in themselves to trample upon every aristocratic pretension that is not based in merit, and to scout every bigot, hypocrite and knave, whose vaunted democracy is an arrogant pretext for profligate ambition and sordid avarice—when every popular meeting shall present the aspect of a deliberative assembly, and at every election every citizen shall conscientiously exercise the right of thinking and acting for himself, we may find cause to admire, rather than to deprecate our political divisions. Like the Lyceum, the Republic may then exhibit the delightful spectacle of the harmonious combination of seemingly discordant opinions, in which the various resources of different minds are seen to contribute in various modes and degrees to the common object of enlightening, improving and blessing all. It is a lesson of wisdom and experience, that the more we know of

ourselves and each other, of our personal and relative interests and obligations, and the more we compare our political, moral and religious condition as it is with what it may be rendered by generous sympathy, reciprocal forbearance, and cordial co-operation, the more we shall be disposed to abstain from unprofitable contentions, and, where opinions only are concerned, to agree to differ, conscious that such agreement is adapted to be alike the cause and consequence of mutual respect.

Who does not regret, as who does not perceive, the political animosities which now distract our country? Who, if he is but just to his observation and consciousness, does not acknowledge that all the evils which we suffer or apprehend are such and such only as the greater diffusion of political intelligence and morality would have prevented, and might remove? Who, that is not wanting in patriotism, will hesitate to admit that an institution, which addresses itself directly to the task of removing the cause of such evils, is admirably suited to the exigencies of the times, and deserves the support of all who witness or experience the want of its benefits?

IV. I can only presume so far upon your indulgence as to attempt a rapid and desultory sketch of the influence of the country and age in which we live upon the condition of man as an intellectual and moral being.

It may be supposed that the cultivation of the intellectual and moral powers has been sufficiently urged by adverting to their necessary agency in the improvement of individuals, the advancement of society, and the establishment and preservation of political institutions. There is another view of our actual condition, which shows more clearly the value and the uses of these capacious faculties. It were misfortune, as well as error, in the individual, to live entirely for himself. The claims of society are, for the most part, local and temporary. Patriotism is not an exclusive sentiment. It is the privilege of our nature, that we sustain a more extended relation with its corresponding obligations; and such, let it be remarked, is the adaptation of our talents and opportunities to the various pur-



poses of our existence, that fidelity to the highest trust is not incompatible with the proper discharge of the humblest duty. As men, in the largest sense of that comprehensive appellation, we are bound to promote the welfare of our whole race. As immortal beings, we are to strive for the acquisitions that will endure throughout our whole existence. It is in reference to these exalted ends, that knowledge and virtue are to be chiefly prized.

It is foreign to my purpose to attempt a philosophical analysis of the nature and properties of intellect, or to investigate the theory of morals. On this point, as on all the others, I prefer to appeal directly to your observation and experience.

Tell me then, what, as you regard it, is the human mind? Is it not that, which distinguishes man from the thoughtless brute, and from inert matter? Is it not that, which wields and subdues brute force to his will, and which moulds matter in all the forms that minister to his convenience or pleasure? Is it not that, which gives to man the privilege denied to other animals, the power of improvement? Is it not that, which enables him to perceive what he is, where he is, whence he came, and whither he is going; in other words, to understand his nature, to study his relations, to trace his origin, and to learn his destiny? Is it not the only organ of communication between man and man, between different nations, and distant ages? Is it not the only element of his nature which survives dissolution? Is it not the divine ray, which emanates from the source of eternal light?

Tell me, again, from your observation and experience, what is the mind without moral discipline? Although it expatiates in a world of its own, are there not laws to direct its course, to regulate its tendencies, and to render steady and harmonious its multiplied revolutions? May it not be abused, when it should be improved? May it not be darkened, when it should be enlightened? May it not be debased, when it should be purified? May it not grovel in the dust, when it should soar to the highest heaven? Have not human beings been

reduced beneath the level of brutes by the neglect or abuse of their intellectual faculties, almost as much as they have ever been raised above them by their proper cultivation? Have not nations sunk into ruin, from want of the redeeming influences of knowledge and virtue? Have not ages been buried in oblivion, without skill enough to rear a monument, or sufficient learning to inscribe an epitaph? On the other hand, is not every thing which is valuable in science, or admirable in art, every thing which is time-honored in political philosophy, every thing which is sacred in religious faith, seen to be closely connected with mental culture and moral discipline? Has not enough been recorded in history, is not enough present to our view, to verify the ancient doctrine that perfection in taste is closely allied with perfection in morality—that perfect goodness and perfect beauty are the same? Alas! that the fairest blessing should often have been converted into the foulest curse,—that learning, from being the hand-maid of virtue, should become the pander of licentiousness—and that it should have required oceans of blood to wash out the stains of intellectual depravity!

I regret that my limits prevent any attempt to do justice to this exhaustless theme. I can only say further, that, if intellectual as combined with moral excellence is the worthiest object of human pursuit, there is much in the circumstances of particular individuals and particular communities to accelerate or to retard their progress in its attainment. It is only where the mind and conscience are free from restraint, it is only where knowledge is supplied like daily food to satisfy the universal appetite, it is only where moral worth is acknowledged to be the brightest trait in private and public character—it is only where these advantages are combined, that man can become worthy of his nature, or even conscious of his destiny. It is liberty which expands the intellect. It is liberty that affords the opportunity to be virtuous. Why should there be any thing appalling in the danger which is seen to be incidental to liberty? Does it not rather become us to perceive and admire

the obvious design of their mutual connexion? "I know no method," says the great moralist of the times, "of forming a manly intellect or a manly character without danger. Peril is the element in which power is developed. Remove the youth from every hazard, keep him in leading strings lest he should stray into forbidden paths, surround him with down lest he should be injured by a fall, shield him from wind and storms, and you doom him to perpetual infancy. All liberty is perilous, as the despot truly affirms; but who would therefore seek shelter under a despot's throne? Freedom of will is almost a tremendous gift; but still a free agent, with his capacity of crime, is infinitely more interesting and noble than the most harmonious and beautiful machine. Freedom is the nurse of intellectual and moral vigor."

Would that I could sketch from history some of the most striking portraits of individuals, and also some of the most imposing scenes of national grandeur, and there point to blemishes and defects, which you would at once trace to the illiberal policy of other countries and of a different age! Would that I could show you by a strict and searching comparison, that we are the only people who bask in the unclouded sunshine of intellectual freedom, and breathe the invigorating atmosphere of moral purity! Would that I could convince you, that the condition of such a people is an incentive to usefulness, and a title to glory, co-extensive with the success of their institutions and the benefit of their example!

We live in an age of intellectual light. Science is stripped of the mystery, in which political and religious despotism had for centuries enveloped it. It is no longer cloistered in monasteries. It is no longer imprisoned in walled colleges. It is no longer buried in unknown tongues. It is no longer revered as supernatural inspiration. It is no longer the privilege of the few. It is no longer, as, while abused, it too often proved, the scourge of the many.

We live in an age of moral power. Whatever is opposed to civil and religious liberty begins to disappear. Thrones of

despots totter on their base. Limited monarchies yield to the pressure of equal rights. Popery grasps a barren sceptre. Protestantism breaks loose from ecclesiastical domination. Prejudice no longer obstructs the march of truth. The press abhors scrutiny and defies restraint. The haughtiness of aristocracy defers to the modesty of merit. Avarice is openly converted into beneficence, or hides its shame in obscurity. Good principles triumph in the conflict with error. Good habits attest the prevalence of virtue. Public opinion guards, regulates, and promotes the public interests.

In this country the liberal tendencies of the age are concentrated. Hence they have been diffused; hither they re-act. Here it is their proper effect not to destroy, but to build up; not to paralyze, but to invigorate; not to sow division, but to strengthen union. They are the life-blood, which flows to and from the heart through the veins and arteries of our political system; and their circulation constitutes its vitality. The intellectual and moral being is here reared from the cradle in the undisturbed possession of all the advantages, and continues through life susceptible to all the influences which they are suited to impart. It is for us to contemplate the immeasurable usefulness, of which, by his circumstances, he is thus rendered capable. It is for us to appreciate the value of those attainments, which referring rather to his nature and destiny than to his present condition, can perish only with the mind that possesses them.

In connexion with this topic I may briefly state, that effects, which mocked the skill, and tortured the ambition of former times, are already visible, and are seen to have been produced by a change of means, which strongly illustrates the view that I have taken. It was the vain boast of Archimedes, that if he had a station on which to rest his lever, he could move the world. Our country is the station, from which the world has been already moved by a moral power unknown to Archimedes. It was the vain regret of Alexander, at the height of

earthly dominion, that there were no more worlds to conquer. In our age, Science has extended its conquests to other worlds.

To what nobler purpose can the Lyceum be devoted, or to what is it more strikingly adapted, than to the cultivation of intellectual and moral excellence? While it excites the individual to a consciousness of his powers, while it interweaves its influence with all the interests of society, while it exemplifies the benefits of our political institutions, let it never be its reproach, that the great object, for which life, in any of its relations, is to be valued, or for which knowledge, in any of its departments, is to be sought, has been neglected or forgotten.

I have thus undertaken to represent the present age as the period, and this country as the theatre of the proudest triumphs of human improvement. Moral courage is never disheartened by difficulties and dangers, so long as the mind's eye can discover satisfactory and practicable results. I have endeavored to exhibit such as are or may be successfully accomplished; and the purpose of the lecture will be answered, if you have been led to perceive, that in the accomplishment of these results, the Lyceum may be rendered an useful instrument.

The country in which we live is described in geography as the first settlement of a new world. The unprejudiced stranger, who has crossed the Atlantic, whether he approaches the rocky ramparts of the eastern coast, or pursues the chain of the northern lakes, or roams through the solitudes of the western wilderness, or threads his devious track amidst southern savannas—whether his heart shudders at the horrors of the wintry tempest, or his ear is stunned by the roar of the cataract, or his eye reposes on a boundless forest, or all his senses are regaled by the beauty, fragrance and melody of a luxuriant plantation—whether he treads with a more than classic reverence the rock of Plymouth, or climbs with the zeal of a naturalist the cliffs of the Alleghany, or explores in the canoe of the Indian the scattered sources of the Missouri, or glides in the steam-boat of Fulton over the smooth surface of the Ohio, finds himself in a region abounding with works of nature of

unsurpassed magnificence and sublimity. He finds himself, too, amongst a people, whose origin and progress are characterized by a moral grandeur worthy of their natural advantages. He reads their history with the enthusiasm with which he surveys their territory. In the character of the Puritan fathers of New England, he traces the same rude features of strength and endurance that are impressed upon her iron-bound shores, her craggy mountains, and her stubborn soil. In the early fortunes of Virginia, in the triumphant struggle of her adventurous founder with difficulties deemed insurmountable, he is reminded of that "stupendous scene," where the impetuous Shenandoah suddenly bursts the barrier of the Blue Ridge, and sweeps away in a moment the obstacles which had for centuries impeded its passage to the ocean. In the school of Virginia statesmen he reads the lessons of profound and practical wisdom, alike quick-sighted to discern an infraction of the people's rights, and to devise a remedy for their wrongs, which guided the pen that drafted the Declaration of Independence, and wielded the sword that was sacredly devoted to liberty. He repairs to Mount Vernon to contemplate the visible relics of the pure taste, the virtuous ambition and the happy old age of Washington; and though he is there pointed to his grave, he still feels his presence in the simple majesty, the mellow ripeness, and the softened harmony of all which surrounds him. In the clouded dawn, the fearful conflicts, and the mighty issue of the Revolution, he studies the destiny of a people, worthy of the blessings which liberty bestows, and fit to conduct the march of civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Following in the track of the pioneers of the western settlements he recounts with pride the monuments of their perseverance, industry, public spirit and prosperity. He perceives art boldly attempting to rival nature in their canals. He admires the growth and opulence of their transylvanian cities. He discovers the smoke of the steam-engine as far as he can descry the smoke of the log-hut. He finds the farmer only preceding the mechanic, and the mechanic the manufacturer,

and all classes employed in the honorable competition of rendering private industry subservient to the public weal. Throughout this vast country he perceives geographical diversities blended into political union, and local interests promoted by mutual dependence. He inquires the extent of territory, and calculates the increase of population. He notes the varieties of soil and climate, and the profusion of animal, vegetable and mineral productions; and he looks forward to the period, seemingly not far distant, when this republic shall be pre-eminent amongst the nations of the earth.

Such is the scene presented to the eyes of the transient observer. Such are the recorded events imprinted on his memory, and such the associations that cluster in his imagination. If he have the curiosity of a philosopher as well as the enthusiasm of a traveller, he is not content with an external view of the present, or an historical outline of the past. He investigates the causes that have wrought and are producing such wonderful effects. He takes an intimate survey of men and things. He seeks the friendship of individuals, that he may learn from their lips the lessons of experience. He mingles in all the circles of society, that he may trace the clue of its innumerable combinations. He is admitted into the family, where the mother shows her children as her jewels, and where the infant character is formed by parental precept and example. He visits the free school, where education is seated as the faithful nurse by the side of the cradle of liberty. He enters the Lyceum, and is welcomed to the presence of intelligence and virtue. Last of all, he joins the multitude that go to the House of God in company, and there, amidst different modes of worship and instruction, he beholds the all-pervading influence of religion, in its sublime and endearing attributes of holy faith, immortal hope, and heavenly charity.

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**LECTURE IV.**

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**ON THE**

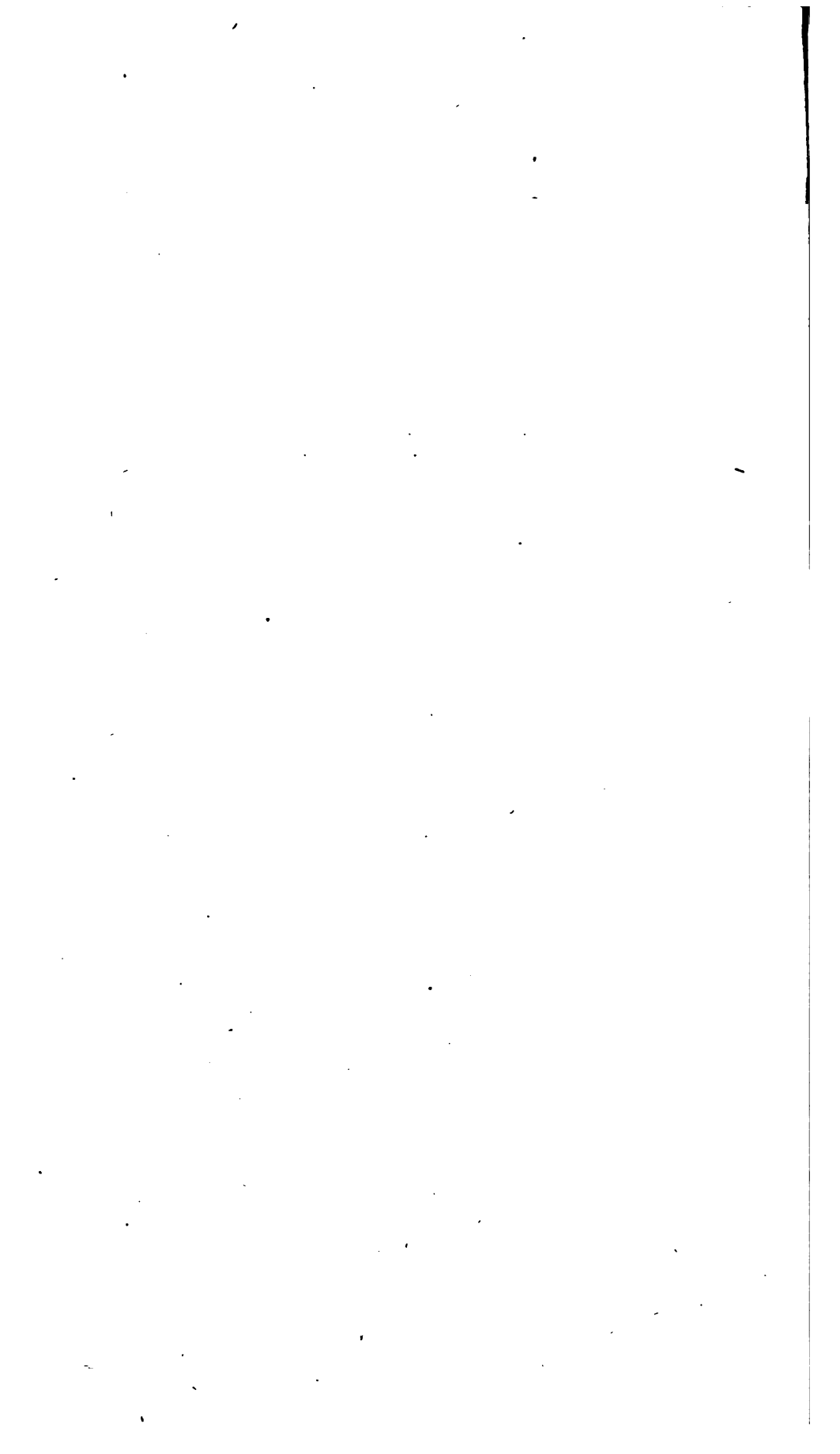
**EDUCATION OF THE FIVE SENSES**

**BY**

**BY WILLIAM H. BROOKS.**

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## EDUCATION OF THE FIVE SENSES.

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THE sun is on his way through the heavens, diffusing his mighty influences abroad over the universe : tell us the great purpose of his magnificent mission. A few hours more, and the firmament will glow with the mild and mingled radiance of planet and star : "But wherefore all night long shine these?" Why has the earth, beneath, its profuse variety of surface, with rock and stream, plain, mountain, and valley, in combinations no where the same, but every where interesting ; subject also to the imposing changes of the seasons, and now adorned with so grateful a green, relieved with thousands and thousands of flowers ; and again here with the forest, and there with the harvest ? The myriad substances of the material world are characterized each by its own dimensions, its own hardness or softness, its own asperity or smoothness, from the atom to the mountain, from the obdurate rock to the yielding fluid, from the rough bark of the oak to its polished leaves. Surely there is some good reason for all this diversity. Are not the powerful odors of Eastern spices, the breath of aromatic herbs, and the sweet scents of our own wild flowers floating on the gales of Heaven ? Is not the table of nature now and always spread from pole to pole, with an infinite multitude of luxuries, with the fowls of the air, the fish of the sea, the beasts of the field, and the contributions of the vegetable

kingdom supplying the delicious and abundant fruits scattered from clime to clime? The birds pour forth their heaven-taught notes; the torrent, the tempest, and the ocean roar; and the human voice, with its tones of feeling and intelligence, utters music the divinest of all. But why is all this? Why indeed is the whole creation of God but one majestic assemblage and exhibition of objects of sense—of things appealing to the sight, and the smell, the taste, the hearing, and the touch? Is it not because the great design of the Deity in creating the universe was, so far as we can know, the education of the human soul by means of the bodily senses? This surely can be no disparagement from the dignity of his purposes, for we know of no created thing so precious or so noble as is the soul of man.

It is, then, no unworthy object of desire to know if the senses, those material organs which the Deity has honored by associating them with the immaterial soul, and so curiously wrought them that they can be, and are the great conveyances of knowledge to the mind—if these can be improved by human interference; and if so, how that improvement can be effected. I acknowledge the subtile and difficult nature of this hitherto almost untouched inquiry, in the science of education. Few writers upon the human mind have thought it worth their while to trace the current of the intellect to its source, and to observe the place where springs the sacred fountain and the influences, whether earthly or heavenly, which affect its early course. Scarcely one has entered upon such investigation for the high purposes of education. But to the teacher, who deals with the unformed mind, and presumes to shape the Parian marble, it is an imperative duty to study not only the finished statue, but also practically the block itself, that he may discover its original qualities, and ascertain what is necessary to transform and elevate the shapeless elements into the noblest image of man. And how feebly does a comparison of the teacher with the statuary, represent the obligations of the former. The importance of his making the greatest and best use of every influence he can exert upon that celestial

spirit, which has been placed upon earth in a mortal body, for its education, and is destined to live forever and forever to be affected by his interference, does indeed transcend all human calculation, and runs beyond time far, far into eternity.

What then is the mind before its earliest sensation, before it holds its first beautiful but mysterious communion with inward wants, or with external nature? The senses, acting as interpreters between the material universe and the ethereal spirit, have not yet begun to dispense to the soul that divine knowledge, which is its life and its growth, and which is naturally destined to cease to be dispensed to it only at death, when that soul has already improved, or failed for ever to improve, its opportunities of receiving all the light and strength from the material world which that world can afford. What is the mind before this celestial machinery of sensation is first set in motion? We might almost say it is nothing,—the intellectual gem is in the ore and in the mine: it is what Adam was before the Almighty breathed into his poor form of clay the awakening breath of life. The faculties of the mind are yet inanimate; the soul is still and dormant, and its deep sleep cannot be broken but by the talismanic power of a sensation. It is like the creation. "The earth is without form and void; darkness is upon the face of the deep;" but "the Spirit of God is moving upon the face of the waters;" and can alone effectually say, "Let there be light."

A sensation is experienced, and the mind is now roused to action, and begins from a material impulse a spiritual career, destined to be eternal. The pure and undisciplined eye, which will in after life make the mind "creation's lord," and will look upon so many sights of happiness and misery, now dawns upon a mother's blessed smile, upon the kind countenances of relatives and friends, upon the infinite variety of the works of nature and of art. All is new, all interesting, to a degree absorbing beyond our conception as much as beyond our memory. The hand of the infant is raised to what the eye perceives; the eye turns to what the hand inadvertently

touches ; and the taste, being one of the earliest senses that is gratified, the object is soon brought to its perception. The smell also provokes or prevents the taste, and all the senses are thus connected together in their operations upon the mind, for the valuable purpose of corroborating or correcting each other, as will hereafter be made to appear. Thus the senses are quickly in full and gratified action, and, like bees in spring, incessantly returning to the hive with fresh stores of sweetness, they impart to the mind continually their varied impressions, full of beauty and novelty, so that the soul is engaged in rapid succession in ten thousand acts of fond and admiring observation. Pleasure succeeds to pleasure, and wonder to wonder, while the mind, so soon to be master and disposer of senses and sensations, and of its own operations, is now lost and insensible to its own motions, amidst the numerous and variegated scenes exhibited before it, in the great theatre into which it has been introduced.

By and by something striking is presented for the second time or the third, and probably it may be still oftener before the infant intellect recognizes it as the same. But whenever it once recognizes an object, then it puts forth for the first time the faculty of memory. Memory begins her holy office, and the child becomes more the image of God in gaining something like one of his attributes—knowledge of the past as well as the present. The child takes a second step in mastering this precious faculty, when upon a repeated perception of an object he not only recognizes that object, but has suggested by it another, previously, but not now associated with it. He sees something belonging to his sweet smiling mother ; and though she be no longer there, her affectionate look again gladdens his thoughts. Another victory over the memory is necessary to the mind before it has that faculty entirely productive ; it is to have past perceptions or conceptions suggested by past perceptions, without the intervention of sensible objects. But such an exertion of mental power evidently belongs to a riper age than that now under consideration. It fully appears, then, that all the early

acts of the memory spring from sensation—the memory, that noble and capacious faculty of the soul—the storehouse of our experiences, which guide us in our conduct, and of the materials which reflection converts into knowledge.

At a very early age, even before the child begins to observe things very closely, he will unconsciously make a comparison among objects before him, and turn decidedly to the most striking. The strongest light, the sharpest sound attract his notice. This is discrimination; these are the incipient efforts of the judgment. After a time, he will measure with his hand, or his eye corrected by his hand, the sizes and distances of objects, or compare with his taste or smell this sweetness or fragrance with that. He has now in active use the faculty of judgment, and long indeed must he exercise it upon perceptions before he can apply it to abstract thought, or even trace or know any thing of the movements of his own mind.

Somewhat later, when the young mind begins to unite the various infant experiences it has treasured up in the memory, perhaps when the child recognizes a friendly countenance, and out of his past simple pleasures schemes a new one, then he is exerting his imagination. Soon he will learn to weave assiduously a broad web of his past impressions, to pourtray to himself a picture of the future, whether with the bright lights of hope or the gloomy shades of fear, or with both in mingled relief. With how many fond but false expectations does the imagination, built upon erroneous perceptions, elate us; with how many dark but unreal forebodings depress us! Based upon accurate and full observations, it lights up the eye of the artist, the poet, and the orator, with their noblest conceptions, but otherwise cheats them with tinsel promises, and leaves them to lament the baseless fabrics of their visions. But let us reflect that the earliest, and for a long period the only exercise of this faculty, must be upon thoughts relative to objects of sense, or the immediate results of sensation alone.

The mind is at first completely subject to the influence of out-

ward objects; and even for a considerable length of time bestows only a passive notice upon them; conscious of, in fact, having no power to attend to one thing alone, and exclude others simply because it is desirous of so doing. Whenever it does acquire this power, it must evidently exercise it upon a multitude of sensible objects, and give it a protracted training upon them, before it can gain the more subtle faculty of attending voluntarily to its ideas of reflection.

We have traced the leading faculties of the mind to their original efforts. What then is the issue? That all of them, the memory, the judgment, the imagination, the attention, all spring into action by the influence of impressions upon the senses, and all are for a long period employed solely upon those impressions conveyed to the mind. The senses are the nursing mothers of the mental powers. In fact, for many years, and in most persons during all their lives, those faculties are chiefly employed upon such materials as the senses furnish to the mind. How then can the teacher be addressed too earnestly upon the importance of the senses to the mind, and upon the necessity of educating them to activity and accuracy, if indeed they can be educated, since their sluggishness and inaccuracy can give but little employment to the original intellectual faculties, and that little fitted to pervert them. When we read the hallowed pages of Milton, and feel our souls elevated within us as we walk in the paradise of his imagination; while we give ourselves up to conviction as we follow the clear course of the honest, acute and strong judgment of Locke; when we reflect upon that illustrious appeal for the union of these states, which subdued a senate and enlightened a nation; when we think that these immortal efforts of the human mind were produced by a memory, a judgment, an imagination and a power of voluntary attention, which for years were exerted upon sensible objects alone, and *thus* laid the foundation of their power, we shall not easily admit that it is of small moment whether the senses be educated or not; whether they actively

send into the mind true and lively images, or sluggishly impart dull and inaccurate impressions.

Is then that noblest of telescopes, the actual model of the best glasses, the human eye, capable of giving better perceptions to the mind by means of education? Is this, are our other senses susceptible of improvement by human effort? Or has the Deity made us responsible for the improvement of all our other talents and not of these? The contrary may be conjectured from the analogy of the other parts of the body; it may be inferred from the nature and operations of the senses, and it can be absolutely proved by experience.

The hand must be educated to its exercises before it can perform them well. It must gain strength and power of application by several years' training; the difference between the right hand and left shows, though inadequately, the natural, undisciplined condition of the hand. Even when well brought up, the hand must still be educated to each separate accomplishment, as writing or playing upon the piano. So it is with the arm; the blacksmith's arm is muscular. So it is with the foot and lower extremities; long practice in dancing lends ease and gracefulness to the step.

The nature and operations of the senses imply their susceptibility of improvement. When we wish to observe an object at some moderate distance, we receive the rays of light from that object into the pupils of both eyes. The two lines of light make a certain angle or opening at leaving the object, that angle being smaller as the distance is greater.\* Having made a muscular effort, and observed the size of the angle made by the lines of light, and having measured by the sense of touch, or discovered in any other way the actual distance of the object, we come at last, after much experience, to compute that distance by the degree of exertion to which we put the muscles. To see things very near, we voluntarily adjust the eye. When we thus use a muscular effort to suit the eye to the dis-

\* Bostock.



tance, we cause a sensation by it, which is conveyed to the mind at the same time that the picture of the object is presented to it. Now by ascertaining the actual distance in repeated instances, by the touch or otherwise, and comparing it with the muscular effort, we soon learn to judge of the nearness or remoteness of objects by the muscular efforts alone. We have other means of estimating distances in the vividness of the light coming from them to the eye, and in the number of intervening objects. Seeing an object very indistinctly, or with a great number of others between it and us, other circumstances being out of the case, we conclude that the object is remote.\* But it must require long and careful practice to be able to make accurate estimates in this way. Are not then the senses susceptible of improvement? If we judge of distances by the angle formed by the rays of light coming to us from the object, by the muscular effort we make to adapt our sight to various degrees of nearness, or by the distinctness with which we see it, or by the number of intervening objects, shall we not evidently improve our senses by exercise? Vision also needs education and is susceptible of improvement in observing the motion of bodies, for we estimate the actual motion by that pictured upon the retina or back part of the eye, and by the various sizes of the image.† But we need practice to make us adepts in judging of the true from the represented change of place. So with the ear; we judge of distance by the intensity or weakness of sounds, pronouncing this body to be near, and that remote, because the sound from the first is full, from the second faint.‡ To be sure, we are not generally very accurate in our estimate of distances by the ear; but if we had our sense of hearing well trained, we should without doubt find it a better servant. To judge in what direction sound comes to us, we make both ears answer their purpose by a comparison of the intensity of the two sensations, and by thus forming a judgment of the place from which the sound proceeds. But we must make

\* Bostock.    † Magendie.    ‡ Magendie.

many and many a trial before our judgments will be accurate. Still it may, after all, be said that we get immediate information of the distances of objects from the sensation; that it is natural for us to see or hear the distance of things simultaneously with the color or sound, and without the intervention of the judgment, and without any such training of the sight and hearing, or such habituating of the mind to comparisons. But it is well known that infants cannot judge of distances, and do not see them, because they grasp at things far beyond their reach, as much as those within it, not having learned to measure distances by the eye. And any person accustomed to estimating distances, a surveyor for example, can judge of them with much more precision than another, without his experience. But the question was long ago settled by Cheselden's valuable observations on the blind youth whom he restored to sight. As the account is rarely to be met with, and is pertinent to the subject of this lecture, I will quote from it freely.

This youth was born blind, or lost his sight so early that he had no remembrance of ever having seen, and was couched, when he was between thirteen and fourteen years of age, by Mr. W. Cheselden.

"The young man could before distinguish a good light, black, white and scarlet, but could not distinguish the shape of any thing, and knew so little of the colors mentioned, that he did not recognize them on gaining his sight, and did not think them the same he had before known by those names.— When he first saw, he was so far from making any judgment about distances, that he thought all objects whatever "touched his eyes," as what he felt did his skin; and thought no objects so agreeable as those which were smooth and regular, though he could form no judgment of their shape, nor guess what it was in any object that was pleasing to him. He knew not the shape of any thing, nor any one thing from another. But upon being told what things were, whose form he before knew from feeling, he would carefully observe, that he might know them again. But having too many objects to learn at

once, he forgot many of them. Having often forgot which was the cat and which the dog, he was ashamed to ask ; but catching the cat (which he knew by Feeling), he was observed to look at her steadfastly, and then setting her down, said, so, Puss ! I shall know you another time. About two months after he was couched, he discovered at once that pictures represented solid bodies, when to that time he considered them only as party-colored planes or surfaces, diversified with variety of paint ; but even then he was no less surprised, expecting the pictures would feel like the things they represented, and was amazed when he found those parts which, by their light and shadow appeared now round and uneven, felt only flat like the rest ; and asked which was the lying sense, Feeling or Seeing. Being shown his father's picture in a locket, and told what it was, he acknowledged a likeness, but was vastly surprised ; asking how it could be that a large face could be expressed in so little room, saying it should have seemed as impossible to him, as to put a bushel of any thing into a pint. At first, he could bear but very little sight, and the things he saw he thought extremely large ; but upon seeing things larger, those first seen he conceived less, never being able to imagine any lines beyond the bounds he saw ; the room he was in, he said he knew to be but part of the house, yet he could not conceive that the whole could look bigger. A year after first seeing, being carried upon Epsom Downs, and observing a large prospect, he was exceedingly delighted with it, and called it a new kind of seeing. And now being lately couched of his other eye, he says, that objects at first appeared large to this eye, but not so large as they did at first to the other ; and looking upon the same object with both eyes, he thought it looked about twice as large as with the first couched eye only, but not double that we can any way discover."\* We see clearly from this narrative, that impressions on the organ of sight give us originally no idea of the distance or shape of objects,

\* Philosophical Transactions, vol. 7. pp. 491. et seq.

and that we are able to judge of figure and remoteness now only from such education of our vision as has been described. We see, too, in general, how much time and pains it cost this youth to learn to see even with the advantage of a mind already developed. It seems to me, then, that the nature and operations of the senses fully imply, that they are susceptible of, and do actually receive, improvement by cultivation.

But this important question is positively decided by experience. Physiologists, who have carefully examined the physical nature of man, and probably the observation of most of us, bear full and explicit testimony to this point. Magendie says, "By the exercise of the sense of touch it may be brought to a very great degree of perfection, as is often observed in many professions." "We know from numerous observations, that the vivacity of the impressions received by the senses, is increased by the loss of one of those organs. For example, the smell is more delicate in blind or deaf persons, than in those who enjoy all their senses." The deaf, dumb, and blind girl, in the Asylum at Hartford, from whose unfortunate mind knowledge is at two principal entrances "quite shut out," has an exquisite sense of touch, sews very well, recognizes by the touch those persons of whom she is fond, and those whom she dislikes, and easily selects her own ten-cent piece from a handful of change. Now it is not to be supposed that the blind, who almost always have a nicer sense of touch than people generally have, in just such proportion of numbers as there are blind people, are possessed of this superiority by birth; but they depend upon the sense so much that they use it more, and attend to its sensations more carefully. Sailors can see further, and Indians can hear a greater distance than persons generally can, because they find it necessary to exert their faculties of sight, and hearing so much more and with so much greater attention. The epicure can distinguish by the smell and taste flavors so subtle, that plain eaters would be entirely insensible of them. We all know, too, how much the musical ear is susceptible of improvement by education. Does not experience abundant-

ly and unanswerably prove, that the senses may be educated to activity and accuracy?

By a survey, then, of the analogy of other parts of our system, and of the nature and operations of the senses themselves, and lastly by our own copious experience, we arrive at the same great and cheering result. We know that the senses can be made to send larger and better streams of knowledge to the soul by the influences of education. How then can they best be educated; how brought to their most efficient condition? Exercise them, exercising simultaneously the powers of the mind. Exercise is the very spirit of all education. It is the means of all improvement of the body, the understanding, and the feelings. Employ the mind then, actively upon sensations. The faculties of seeing and hearing, of the touch, smell, and taste, belong to the soul as well as the body. The painting upon the retina of the eye does little more towards seeing than does the image in the mirror. The eye does not see the landscape of itself, but the mind sees it through the eye. It were absurd to expect the hand to learn to write by tracing a million times the shape of the letters without the supervision of the mind. It is evident, then, that the senses can be improved only through the co-operation of the mind. If therefore any one should say that all that can be done is to improve perception, the act of the mind—and not sensation, the function of the senses, and therefore there is no such thing as educating the senses, we are prepared to perceive the futility of the objection. The action of the mind, called perception, is a part of the process of seeing. Not that it is necessary to admit that the material organ itself is incapable of improvement by education, for the analogy of the other parts of our system imply the contrary, and undoubtedly use gives a greater command of the muscles exerted in sensation; but still the exercise of the sense of sight would enable us to see better, although the physical part gained no amendment. For when we wish to observe an object fully and accurately, we make a close and vigorous effort of the mind, and are ready to make a perception

of every part of the sensation. Now by a habit of such close observation, long continued, the Indian hears a footstep at a distance at which the white man hears nothing, and the sailor descries in the horizon a sail which is beyond our sight; and they have made an improvement upon the original power and acuteness of their senses just as much, if the sensation always has been the same; but the mind has become more keen in detecting the smallest parts and points of the impression, as if the sensation now presents a more minute and distinct representation of the object to the mind. We do certainly improve our senses by exercise in one of these ways, and this result is enough to satisfy us.

The training of the senses to activity and accuracy is the earliest part of the education of the individual. The infant, a delicate and helpless stranger among its fellow beings and among the works of God, soon begins to manifest his desire of a more familiar acquaintance with all around him. But little more can be done to improve his senses, which are his means of information, than by putting objects in their way to give them employment, that they may be saved from sluggishness, and to let him or stimulate him to observe objects fully, not hastily and imperfectly. If he please, let him bring the same objects to the concurrent observation of several senses. Let him correct his sight by his touch, his hearing by sight, his smell by taste; and all this he will do of his own accord, if we only do not continually break up his processes of thought by taking him away from the objects of his busy investigation. His thoughts are at work upon his sensations, and the degree of attention he now bestows upon objects of sense, and the accuracy with which he inspects them, are incalculably important, for he is laying the foundations of his mind.

In the succeeding periods of childhood and youth we can interfere much more in increasing the acuteness and power of the senses. We can discipline the sight directly, and to a great extent, and we can have the satisfaction of perceiving the progressive improvement of the faculty. The child may be led

to observe the lengths of pieces of wood, and to make an estimate of them; and may afterwards be permitted to measure them, and discover the degree of accuracy in his decision. The length, breadth and height of rooms, of houses and churches, the distances of remote objects, may exercise his sight and his judgment to a very great extent. Whenever it is convenient, let him compare his estimate with the actual measurement; this will lend a permanent interest to the exercise. For he will want the satisfaction of knowing how near he came to the truth, and will be more careful in future that he may be more accurate, and afterwards he will be encouraged by becoming so. He may also be taught to discriminate the varieties of green in leaves and other things, of yellow and red and blue in flowers and paints, and to distinguish not only the shades of all the colors, but their respective proportions in mixtures of two or more. Let him be encouraged to notice and point out separately the various parts of pieces of furniture and their uses, of a chaise or coach, or other vehicle, and watch their movement and their purpose. Drawing is an excellent exercise, whether of maps, of the shape of objects, or of landscapes. Let him survey carefully and describe the prominent points of a landscape, the elevations and depressions, the mowing, pasture, wood and tillage land, the trees, the houses, and the streams. Listen to his accounts of his plays, of his walks, of his journeys, and of any event of which he may have been a witness. In all these exercises of his sight teach him to be accurate, and whenever it is practicable, let the judgment he pronounces, and the descriptions he gives, be corrected by the truth. The pupil will inevitably be interested, and if he have been a careless and inaccurate observer, will soon become more watchful and exact.

Let him exercise the sense of touch blindfold, comparing the relative hardness and softness of different solid bodies and the density of fluids, the weight also, and the dimensions of length, breadth and thickness of the same solids. Let him learn to estimate lengths also by passing his hand over objects

with different degrees of rapidity ; let him determine also fineness of texture in cloth, of grain in wood or stone, and after deciding, correct himself by looking at the substances. Again, he may judge of the temperature of liquids, and when it is possible, correct his judgment by a thermometer. The pupil may also learn to write and to draw various figures without the help of his sight, and distinguish coins and all kinds of substances from each other.\* The scope of his exercise of this sense may in this way be unbounded.

The ear may receive its discipline in distinguishing, without direction from the eye, the causes of each noise that is made, as that of writing, moving a chair or a table, and in telling the kind of article drawn upon the floor or elsewhere, as wood, or stone, or paper ; with what a blow was given, with the hand, a stick, a hammer or a stone, and what received the blow. Determining all the different musical tones and detecting the counterfeit voices of his companions, will involve great efforts at discrimination, and great exercise of the sense of hearing, as will also the judging of the distances and directions from which sounds proceed.

The smell without the aid of the eye may distinguish the rose, the lily and the pink, and the untold variety of fragrant plants and flowers, and may decide between different kinds of food, aromatic drugs and other odorous substances.

The taste may be disciplined by discriminating between the profuse diversity of fruits, of liquids and of food, without assistance from the other senses. Additional exercise for the taste may be found in distinguishing many kinds of roots and plants and wood and metals.

Such are some of the direct means of improving the senses ; and they are probably susceptible of great variation and extension, and numerous combinations ; let us pass to others, more indirect it may be, but still more important. If the Deity have created the universe partly or wholly for the education of the

\* See Parent's Friend.



human soul, he has completed his plan by giving to the soul the senses to act as its instruments in receiving that education. Accordingly the various sciences which are and have long been used for developing the intellectual powers, are based upon the intercourse which the mind through the senses holds with the material universe. Geography surveys the great natural and social divisions of the globe; astronomy looks upward to the march and array of the heavenly host; arithmetic first counts the sensible objects about us, and mathematics dwells upon their motions and their forms; grammar and rhetoric make the science of language, and language depends upon the ear; and chemistry, mineralogy and natural history all rest upon observation. All these sciences, founded upon the action of the senses, can be understood only through the senses. Books serve to tell and explain what great study and genius have learned. But the only way in which a science can be practically and well understood, is that of mingling with the study, of books a sufficient leaven of original observation, and experience to imbue the whole with life. We deal too much in abstractions in our schools, both for young and old. The senses are not sufficiently used; yet theirs is the evidence most satisfactory to boys' minds as well as ours. In astronomy, the boy studies a treatise, and, as the word goes, *learns* it. But he does not learn it, that is, he gets no practical knowledge, and comparatively little useful discipline. Let him use his eyes. Let his first lesson be in the open volume of the skies. Let him watch the order and motions of the heavenly bodies, and learn the planets and chief constellations. In studying geometry, let him, construct figures; in surveying, let him survey; in geography, let him examine the country around him, making his observations the foundation and standard of comparison for his future studies, and let him delineate every place of which he is learning an account. Follow the same principle in other sciences. What mechanic would think himself preparing his apprentice for usefulness, by giving him books to read about his trade, and some lectures upon the subject, without

letting him work at his business. The apprentice and the student both want the practice as well as the theory, and the practice rather than the theory. How stiff and cramped a thing is a mere book-education! As learning once secluded itself in the monasteries, so now, not always, but too generally, it retires into the school-house eschewing the senses, its natural and most thorough means of education, and grows mystified and confused with poring over abstract ideas alone.

Let the pupil be educated to watchfulness and attention to his sensations in school. Let him not be dull in hearing and seeing, but rouse him by making his studies and recitations interesting by sensible illustrations. Let him not be fickle in attention, but strengthen that faculty by judicious discipline of the senses, till he have acquired the command of it even in studies entirely abstract.

We have seen that sensation awakes the soul from its original sleep, that the great creation is evidently designed to educate the soul and the soul is fitted to be educated by it, that all the intellectual powers are at first and for a long time solely employed upon impressions upon the organs of sense, that all sciences and branches of education are grounded upon observation and can be understood only by means of observation. We know that the accuracy and activity of all business, that skill in every art and mechanical pursuit, that the correctness and life of most literary and scientific description and illustration, all greatly depend upon the state of improvement to which the senses have been trained. To strengthen and sharpen the senses is to give vigor and keenness to the mind. And throughout human existence, whether it be when the lively child is attentive only to feeling and the works of nature, or when he has become an adult, and mingles reflection with observation, or when the man has lost the acuteness and power of his bodily organs in advanced age and lives only in memory and meditation, or even when he has been removed from the world of sense to the world of spirits, at all times

and in all situations, the character and condition of the individual must be decisively influenced for good or for evil by the intercourse he has held through his senses with external nature.

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# **LECTURE V.**

**ON THE**

**MEANS WHICH MAY BE EMPLOYED**

**TO**

**STIMULATE THE STUDENT**

**WITHOUT THE AID OF EMULATION.**

**BY JOHN L. PARKHURST.**

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pointed out, a favor will be conferred on those who regard emulation as an unlawful or an unsafe principle of action; while even they who have no scruples on that point, may find the influence of other motives a desirable auxiliary in the work of education. The importance of the subject assigned me on this occasion, is readily perceived, when we consider, how general is the practice of resorting to the aid of emulation, in families, in common schools, and in literary institutions of a higher order; how powerful this principle is in its operation; and how great and lasting an influence it frequently has in the formation of human character. To do full justice to our subject, would require an elaborate treatise on the principles of education. On the present occasion, being restricted, by feeble health, within narrow limits, I can only offer a few suggestions, without stopping to illustrate my meaning by examples, to prove the correctness of my views by facts and arguments, or to trace my principles to their various practical results.

1. The human mind is formed for activity. It is so constituted that the voluntary exercise of its various faculties on

ject, and has relied for success in stimulating a student, chiefly on that very principle which he professed to avoid. But he understood emulation and he still believes it is generally understood,—to be quite a different thing. *Emulation*,—as he understood the term,—is a love of *superiority*, a spirit of *competition* or *rivalry*, a desire to *outdo others*. It is altogether a *comparative* thing, and derives its whole gratification from a *comparison* of one's self with another, or some others, who are regarded as inferior, or as having been left behind in the race. It is a *selfish* principle, and utterly inconsistent with disinterested benevolence. One who is actuated by better motives, might say to his fellow: "I have a desire to press forward in the path of improvement and usefulness, I am determined to use every effort for the purpose. I should rejoice to see you do the same. Come, then, and go with me. We may each be a help to the other. It will give me pleasure to aid your progress by every means in my power. But if you remit your efforts, I must condemn your negligence. If you fail for the want of opportunity or ability, I shall lament your misfortune. Surely, I cannot wish to see you linger behind. I should be base, indeed, to derive pleasure, from seeing another destitute of a good which I myself enjoy." For a more extended discussion of this subject, see the chapter on "Emulation and Ambition" in "Elements of Moral Philosophy," by the writer of the Lecture.

appropriate objects, is a source of pleasure. But there are several ways in which the mind, especially of a child, may become fatigued, or wearied, or disgusted. Mental exertion may be too long continued. The mind may be too long confined to a single object. Exercise may be afforded to only one of the faculties, the memory for instance, while the other faculties, more important in their nature, and more interesting to the possessor, are suffered to lie dormant. The mind may be compelled, or reluctantly urged, to direct its attention to a specified object, at a moment when it happens to have a strong preference for some other employment; or it may be required to attend to something, to which it has imbibed an aversion in consequence of injudicious treatment or unfortunate associations of ideas. The pleasure naturally arising from intellectual effort, may also be destroyed by keeping the body too long confined to the same posture. The intimate connexion and mutual influence of body and mind are well known. The body is formed for activity, as well as the mind. If, for want of exercise, or from a confined posture, the blood does not circulate freely and all the vital functions go on briskly, the intellectual operations will be impeded. When the bones begin to ache, or the blood to stagnate, the mind becomes dull, and that which otherwise would be very interesting, now loses its power to charm. Let, then, the parent or teacher carefully guard against all these counteracting influences, and he will find that the pupil will voluntarily, and with pleasure, exercise his mental faculties and his bodily senses on such subjects and such objects as are suited to his age and capacity.

But what are the subjects, and what are the objects, to which the attention of the mind should be invited? In the case of children, we may infer the design of nature, and may learn what is best suited to their capacity, by observing to what they, of their own accord, chiefly direct their attention and curiosity. It is to the colors, forms, and other sensible properties, together with the names and uses, of material objects. Now, it is the part of a wise teacher, to follow nature; to make the inquisi-

tiveness of children the means of their improvement ; and to gratify, encourage, and guide their curiosity, by giving them information, and assisting them to distinguish and describe the colors, forms, uses, &c. of the objects around them. Here is a wide field for inquiry and instruction. The various works of art, and the multiform productions of nature, animal, vegetable, and mineral, lie open to inspection. But even here a selection must be made, and only those facts and operations must be presented to the mind, which it is capable of comprehending. And caution must be used, not to present too many new objects and new ideas in rapid succession. This distracts the mind, produces confusion of thought ; precludes a careful observation of the properties, the difference, and resemblances of individual objects ; and of course prevents any thing valuable from being treasured up in the memory. In such circumstances, the mind makes a desperate effort to grasp every thing, and fails to secure any thing. The disappointment is painful, and disgust and aversion are liable to ensue. The same caution is necessary in teaching children or beginners any branch of learning whatever. An aversion to being taught is frequently imbibed while learning the alphabet. But this probably arises, in most instances, from the circumstance, that so many new characters, of various forms, are presented to the eye in such rapid succession, that the child, finding it impossible to distinguish and remember them, gives over the attempt in despair, and becomes listless, inattentive, and averse to the task. If the letters were presented one at a time, and each rendered familiar before a new one was introduced, they would be learned with ease and with pleasure. Geometrical lines, surfaces, and solids, are, however, better adapted to the faculties of a young child, as being, in their forms, more regular, and less complicated, than the alphabetic characters.

I have dwelt chiefly on the kind of instruction suitable for children, because it requires more skill to teach them, than to teach older students, and because, if a fondness for learning is imbibed in childhood, and correct intellectual habits are then

formed, the grand point is gained;—the future improvement of the pupil is almost secure;—that fondness and those habits can seldom fail to remain, to stimulate and guide the researches of future years. That the intellectual and moral character is frequently determined by early impressions, is a remark, trite indeed, but so important, that it ought to be repeated, again and again, in the ears of every parent and guardian, and teacher of the rising generation.

Have I digressed from my subject? I think not—at least, not far. The result to which we come is, that a most powerful means of stimulating the student, is, *to teach him in a judicious and skilful manner*. Do this, and avoid all counteracting influences, and he will *love to learn*. The exercise of the faculties, and the acquisition of new ideas, are both, naturally, sources of pleasure to the mind. This pleasure, once tasted, will be again desired. This desire, which gains strength by fruition, is a stimulus, pure in its nature, safe in its operation, salutary in its influence, and powerful in its effects.

But there are many teachers who do not afford their pupils a proper *opportunity* to exert their faculties. Instead of setting their pupils to *thinking* and *investigating*, they, as far as possible, do all the thinking for them; thus making them almost entirely *passive* in the acquisition of ideas. The teacher who wishes to stimulate his pupils to the highest degree of exertion, should guard against this course. He should never do for his pupils what they can do for themselves. He should never tell them a thing which they can find out for themselves. And when they must be assisted, he should afford them only so much assistance that they can do the *rest* themselves. In a word, he should, as far as possible, in all the branches, pursue that *inductive method* which, we hope, will effect a greater advance in the intellectual improvement of the rising generation, than can be effected by any other cause.

2. In connexion with the preceding remarks, we would recommend to aim at variety and novelty in the objects which are presented to the attention of the student. This is peculiar-



ly necessary in the care of children. One great reason why they soon become weary with reading or committing words and sentences which they do not understand, is, that the charm of novelty is wanting. No food being afforded to the mind, the lesson consists merely of a succession of unmeaning sounds, which fall with dull monotonous sameness on the ear. It is in general advisable, that a student should attend to different branches of study at different hours of the day. When he begins to be weary with application to a single branch of learning, to exchange it for another serves as a relaxation to the mind, and may frequently answer that purpose as well as modes of relaxation of a less profitable nature. Caution must be used, however, as already suggested, against dissipating the mind by directing it to too great a variety of objects in a day. And, it may be added, that seldom, if ever, should two studies, that are entirely new, be commenced at the same time. But not a day, and, if possible, not a lesson, should be suffered to pass, without the acquisition of some ideas, which the learner feels to be new. Too often indeed, the learner is taught in such a way, that he cannot distinguish new ideas from old ones; and too many teachers never think of enabling their pupils to make the distinction.

3. A student is stimulated to exertion by guarding against a wandering mind and keeping the attention directed to the proper object. In order that this may be the case during the time of recitation, the questions should be so managed, that individuals cannot answer, unless their attention be unremitting. This may be done, partly, by expressing questions in such language that they cannot be understood without having attended to the previous questions and answers; partly, when one pupil has failed to answer a question, or has answered it wrong, by calling on another to answer, *without repeating the question*; partly, by analyzing the ideas and making each question and answer as short as possible, so as to pass rapidly round the class; partly, when one pupil has committed an error in some part of his answer or performance, by calling on

another to specify the error and to show why it is an error; and partly, by calling on individuals to answer questions or to correct one another's errors, not in the order in which they stand or sit, but promiscuously. And, minute as the circumstance may appear, the teacher will find it useful, in many cases, to announce a question previously to calling the individual by name, who is desired to answer it. The putting of questions promiscuously, and refusing to repeat a question which has been once distinctly announced, may be made a powerful means of keeping alive the attention of a whole class, or even of a whole school, during an exercise which concerns the whole. It frequently happens, that when one individual of a class is performing his part of an exercise, the others, or some of them, instead of listening to his performance, are studying that question or that part of the task, which seems likely to come to them. Some effectual means must be taken to defeat all calculations of this kind, as it is of the highest importance that every individual in a class should listen attentively to the performance of every other individual.

4. And in order to stimulate them to exertion in preparing for recitation, no one should be able to calculate what part of the exercise he shall be called on to perform. Some teachers always, at a recitation, begin at one end of the class; so that those who stand at that end, know, to a certainty, that the first part of the lesson will come to them, and those who do not stand there, are almost equally certain that it will not come, to them. I have even seen a class of little fellows, when paraded in due order on the floor, begin and spell each his word in rotation, and run through a column of the Spelling Book in rapid and unbroken succession, without needing the voice of the teacher or even giving him an opportunity to speak. If one of the band had happened to be *absent*, I suppose *his word* must have been omitted.

5. The inducement to study lessons thoroughly, will be much increased, if each scholar is allowed to *try but once* in spelling a word or answering a question. It is, I fear, a gen-

eral practice, to try twice, when the first attempt proves to be an error ; and some hasty spirits will try three or four times almost in a breath, before the teacher has opportunity to put the question to another, or to advise them to pause and consider what they are saying. This habit of *guessing* is truly a lamentable one. "Think before you speak," is a maxim worthy to be frequently inculcated in school. To a pupil who manifests a propensity to disregard this maxim, the teacher might say, "When I ask you a question, you either know how to answer it, or you do not. If you know, you can, by proper care, answer correctly the first time. If you do not know, then be honest enough to say so, and let some one tell that does know ; for the art of guessing is a branch which I do not teach." To limit each pupil strictly to a single answer, except in special cases, not only affords a stimulus to exertion, but induces a habit of consideration, caution, and correctness in speaking, which is of inestimable value.

6. In all cases where it is practicable, it is best, that questions should be asked in the language of the instructor and answered in that of the pupil, instead of using printed questions, and giving answers verbatim as they have been marked with a pencil. If the pupil does not know precisely what questions will be asked, or in what form they will be put, and finds it necessary to answer more by an exercise of understanding than by an act of memory, he will exert himself to understand the subject ; and by so doing, he will acquire more knowledge, will cultivate his mental faculties in a higher degree, and will become far more deeply interested in his studies, than by pursuing a different course.

7. The various means of stimulating a student, which have been brought into view, are chiefly included in the general idea of a skilful method of teaching. I shall now briefly advert to a few, which are of a somewhat different nature. One of these is derived from the power of *sympathy*. There is, in the human breast, a propensity to feel the same emotions which we see manifested by another on whom our attention

is fixed. Hence, if a child perceives that those who are around him, especially his teacher and parents, take a pleasure in knowing those things which he is learning, his own desire to know them, and his pleasure in learning them, will be greatly increased. This is probably the principal reason, that where we find in parents a taste for reading and literary pursuits, we usually find the same in their children. But when a child knows that his parents and teacher consider learning as an *irksome* task, and expect him to consider it so, his heart is closed against the sweet influences of knowledge, and he imbibes an antipathy to the very sight or name of a book.

§ Another means of stimulating the student, is the pleasure of meeting the approbation of his teacher, parents, and friends. What pleasure more exquisite, than that of knowing that we give pleasure to others? What sweeter bliss, than that of being beloved by those whom we love? Such is the pleasure which the child enjoys, when he sees the approving smile of his parent or teacher. When he gives an account of what he has learned, or answers questions relative to it; to hear his teacher say, "You have got your lesson well;" or, "I am glad that you understand this lesson so well,"—is a reward, which would compensate him for hours of toil even if the getting of the lesson had been in itself a hard and painful task. How unfit, then, for their office, are those teachers, who listen to the recitations of their pupils with cold indifference, and seldom manifest a lively pleasure in witnessing their improvement! But here much caution must be used, lest a spirit of rivalry should be excited, attended with vanity and pride on the one hand, and with envy and hatred, ill-humor and despondency, on the other. Where several are associated in the same study, it will happen that some will get their lessons much better than others who are equally studious. In such cases, there is much danger of wounding the feelings of the latter by the bestowment of praise on the former. Where it is possible, it is much the best way to praise a whole class at a time. Where this cannot be done, let commendation be sparingly

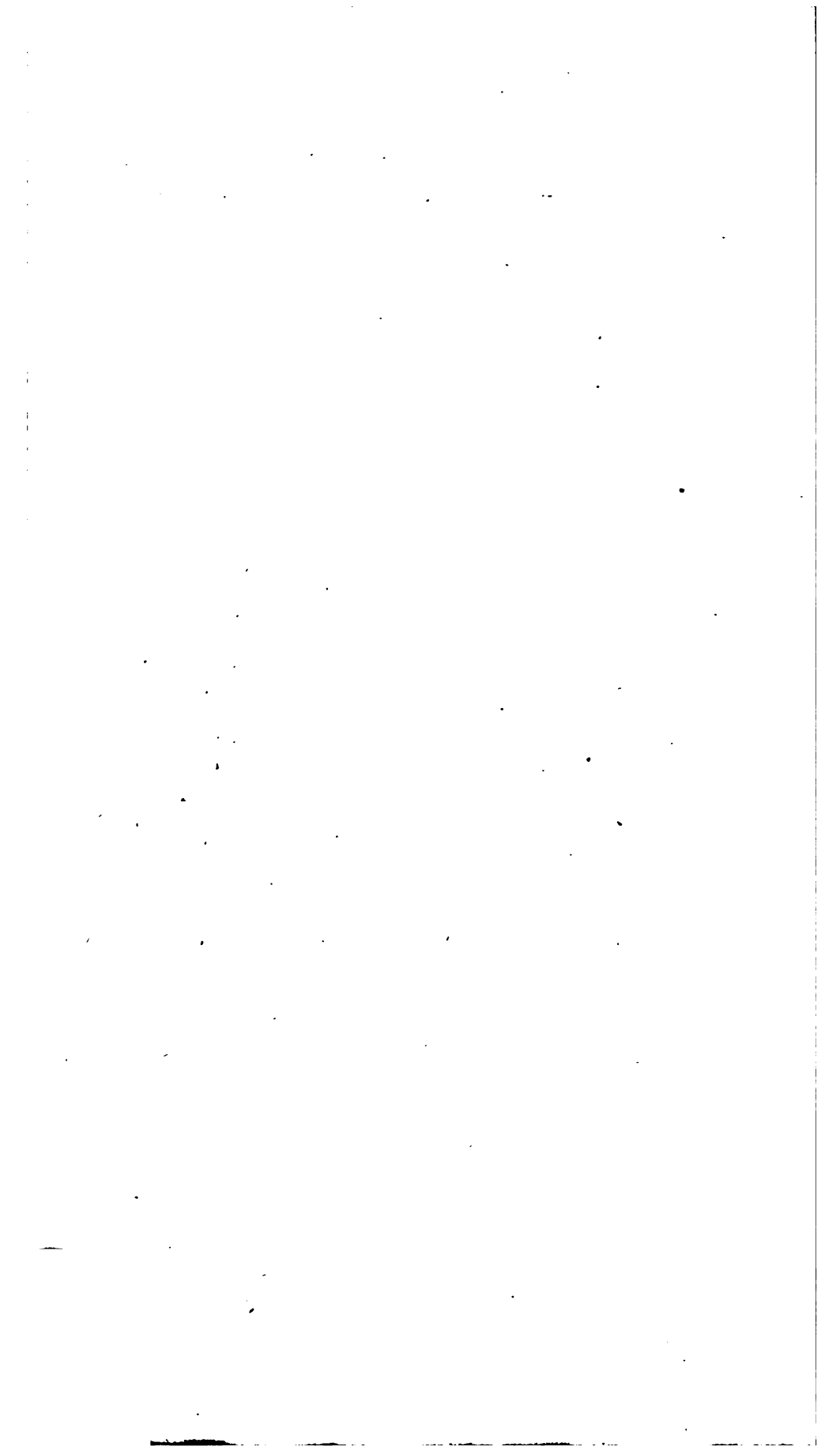
and cautiously bestowed on those who have distinguished themselves, and let every appearance of harshness, censure, or impatience, be avoided in regard to those whose efforts have been less successful. And whenever these latter individuals happen to get a lesson better than usual; tell them so, and let them see that you feel a double pleasure in their improvement. Where scholars are indolent, or negligent, or do not try to learn, it is proper to let them know how much pain their conduct gives you; and perhaps sometimes a gentle reprimand for their waste of time and misimprovement of privileges, may be expedient; but any degree of harshness, any thing like scolding, driving, or compulsion, so far from making them love learning, will only serve to increase their aversion to it. Whether corporal punishment should ever be used in a school, to deter from the commission of crimes, is a question which it does not belong to me to decide or discuss; but sure I am, that the rod and the ferule are the worst means that ever were devised, to get knowledge into the head or the love of it into the heart.

9. Another means of stimulating the student, is to *associate* as many *pleasing ideas* as possible with the thought of his lesson, his book, his school, and his teacher. The expectation of being approved and commended, is indeed included in this head; but there are many *other* pleasing associations, by whose aid flowers may be strewed in the path of learning. A child should always hear an opportunity to learn spoken of as a privilege; a school, as a pleasant place; and an instructor, as a friend. Let this be done, and let every school be made indeed a pleasant place, and every instructor show himself a cordial friend to his pupils, and children would soon love their school as well as they do their play. A teacher of a common school should be a person of an affectionate disposition; one, who loves children, and whose patience and kindness are never exhausted by their ignorance, dullness, and numerous little faults. Yet all the efforts of the most affectionate, skilful, and indefatigable teacher, may avail little, where they

are counteracted by parents and others out of school, who view the subject in a wrong light, and are daily enstamping their false views on the minds of children.

10. Another means of stimulating the student, is to point out to him the connexion between a good education and his future comfort and happiness. On pupils who are old enough to be capable of understanding this connexion, the consideration may be made to bear with great weight. It does not require much discernment or reflection to see, that a cultivated and well-furnished mind is not only a great help in managing one's pecuniary and temporal affairs so as to secure a comfortable subsistence, but adds greatly to a man's respectability and influence as a member of the community.

11. I shall name but one more means of stimulating the student to exertion; and that is, a *sense of duty and of future accountability*. Let the pupil be made to feel, that he owes duties to himself, to his fellow-men, and to his Maker, which he can discharge only by diligence and assiduity in the acquisition of useful knowledge. Let him be made to feel, that if he neglects to do all in his power to promote in the highest degree his own happiness and the happiness of all to whom his influence may extend, he does *wrong*, and must suffer the reproaches of an accusing conscience, and incur the disapprobation of Him who "is greater than the heart and knoweth all things." Let him never forget, that time is short; that he has much to do; and that, of the manner in which these fleeting moments are spent, a review must hereafter take place, and an account be rendered. Let him hence be made to feel, that time is precious; that his privileges are precious; and that he has no *right* to waste the one or neglect the other.



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LECTURE VI.

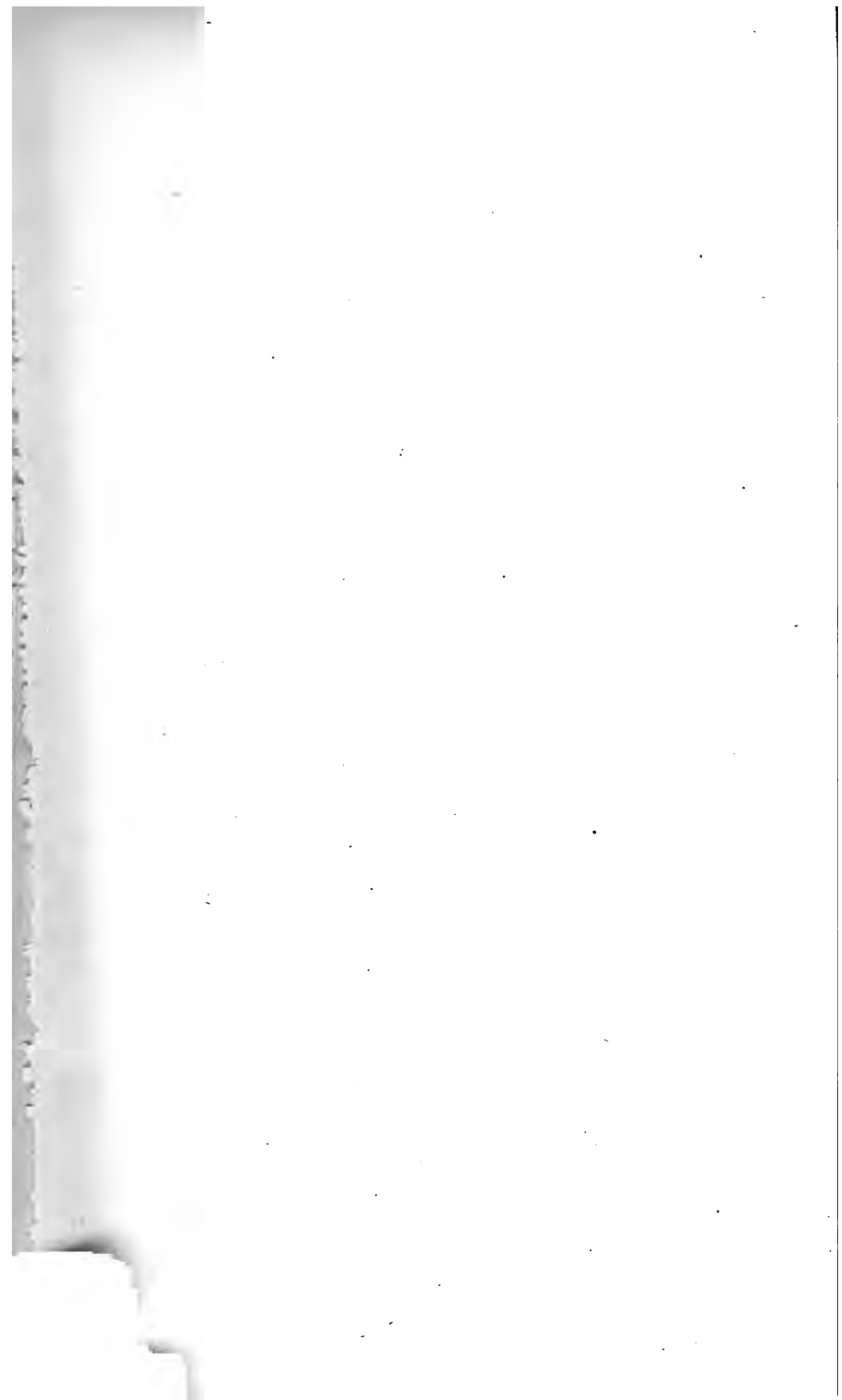
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ON GRAMMAR.

BY GOOLD BROWN.

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## SCIENCE OF GRAMMAR.

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If for a moment we consider the good and the evil that are done in the world through the medium of speech, we shall with one voice acknowledge, that not only the faculty itself, but also the manner in which it is used, is of incalculable importance to the welfare of man. In some of its relations, therefore, the general subject to which I invite your attention, appears to be sufficiently interesting. But it is not to language as the vehicle of moral or of immoral sentiment, of good or of evil to mankind, that the attention of the grammarian is particularly directed. A consideration of the subject in these relations, pertains rather to the moral philosopher. Nor are the arts of logic and rhetoric now considered to be properly within the grammarian's province. Modern science assigns to these their separate places, and restricts grammar, which at one period embraced all learning, to the knowledge of language, as respects its fitness to be the vehicle of any particular thought or sentiment which the speaker or writer may wish to convey by it. Grammar, therefore, has long been briefly defined, "*ars rectè scribendi, rectèque loquendi*," the art of writing and speaking correctly.

Despauter and Lily place writing first, as being that with which grammar is primarily concerned. For over any fugitive colloquial dialect, that is yet unfixed by visible signs, grammar has no control; and the speaking which this ancient defi-

nition embraces, is exclusively that which has reference to a knowledge of letters. Writing evidently improves speech. In proportion as books are multiplied, and the knowledge of written language is diffused, local dialects (which are beneath the dignity of grammar) will always be found to grow fewer, and their differences less. There are, in the various parts of the world, many languages to which the art of grammar has never yet been applied; and to which, therefore, the definition or true idea of grammar, however general, does not properly extend. Ruddiman, in his *Institutes of Latin Grammar*, reversed the terms *writing* and *speaking*, and defined grammar, "*ars rectè loquendi scribendique*;" and, either from mere imitation, or from the general observation that speech precedes writing, this arrangement has been followed by most modern grammarians. Dr. Lowth embraces both terms in a more general one; and says, "Grammar is the art of *rightly expressing* our thoughts by words." It is, however, the province of grammar, to guide us not merely in the expression of our own thoughts, but also in our apprehension of the thoughts, and our interpretation of the words, of others. The art of reading, therefore, is virtually embraced in grammar; for it is but the art of understanding and speaking correctly that which we have before us on paper.

Such is the peculiar power of language, that there is scarcely any subject so trifling, that it may not be plausibly magnified into something great; nor are there many things which cannot be ingeniously disparaged till they shall seem contemptible. Cicero goes further: "*Nihil est tam incredibile quod non dicendo fiat probabile*—there is nothing so incredible that it may not, from the manner of telling it, become probable." The study of grammar has been often overrated, and still oftener injuriously decried. I shall neither join with those who would lessen in the public esteem that general system of doctrines, which has been taught as grammar from time immemorial; nor attempt, either by magnifying its practical results, or by decking it out with my own imaginings, to invest it with any

artificial or extraneous importance. I shall not follow the footsteps of *Neef*, who tells you that "Grammar and incongruity are identical things," and scornfully rejects as nonsense every thing that has been taught under that name; because I am convinced that, of all methods of teaching, none goes further than his, to prove the assertion true. Nor shall I imitate the declamation of *Cardell*; who, in the second page of his *Essay*, recommends the general study of language on earth, from the consideration that "the faculty of speech is the medium of social bliss for superior intelligences in an eternal world;" and who, when he has exhausted censure in condemning the practical instructions of others, thus lavishes praise, in both his grammars, upon that formless, void, and incomprehensible theory of his own: "This application of words," says he, "in their endless use, by one plain rule, to all things which nouns can name, instead of being the fit subject of blind cavil, is the most sublime theme presented to the intellect on earth. It is the practical intercourse of the soul, at once with its God, and with all parts of his works!"—12mo. *Gram.* p. 87.—18mo. *Gram.* p. 49.

Here, indeed, a wide prospect opens before us; but he who traces science, must check imagination, and be content with sober truth.

"For apt the mind or fancy is to rove  
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end."

MILTON.

Restricted within its proper limits, and viewed in its true light, the practical science of grammar has an intrinsic dignity and merit sufficient to throw back upon any man who dares openly assail it, the lasting stigma of folly and self-conceit. For though there be some geniuses who affect to despise the trammels of grammar rules, to whom it must be conceded that many things, which have been unskilfully taught as such, deserve to be despised; yet is it true, as Dr. Adam remarks, that "the study of grammar has been considered an object of great importance by the wisest men in all ages."

The great reputation of Dr. Adam leads me to pursue the quotation a little further: "But, like other sciences," he proceeds, "it has been involved in mystery, and perplexed with needless difficulties; so that, instead of facilitating the acquisition of languages, which was its original design, it has frequently served to render that more laborious."—*Pref. to Lat. Gram.*

These are the sentiments of a scholar, practical teacher, and man of sense; the success of whose Latin and English Grammar is a sufficient evidence that many others have coincided with him. And while the citation concedes, that there was ample room for improvement upon the grammars which were then in fashion, the whole scope of the writer goes to sustain that general system of doctrines which long use has rendered venerable, and long experience proved to be useful. Not that any ancient system of instruction, or any grammar of another language, can be entirely applicable to the present state of our tongue; for languages must needs differ greatly from one another, and even that which is called the same, may come in lapse of time to differ greatly from what it once was. But there are many points in which different languages coincide; and every item of grammatical doctrine is the more worthy to be preserved and regarded, as it approaches the nearer to universality. As for those corrections which want of skill or change of fashion may have made necessary, they may surely be adopted without a departure from any of the great principles of universal grammar. A readiness to throw aside the learning of ages, in favor of the unsettled notions and whimsical theories of neoteric guides, who would subvert the fundamental doctrines of grammar, to teach in a few worthless lessons what can never supply their place, is one of the follies of the present day, which every schoolmaster should exert his influence to counteract.

The general subject of grammar, even within its strictest limits, is so very comprehensive, that I can embrace in this lecture no more than a mere outline of certain views which

occur, as the mind surveys its nature and extent. I have no wish to enter into controversy :—no laurels are won upon the dry and dusty arena of verbal dispute. And of the particular details contained in every petty treatise on the subject, I shall have little or nothing to say. But let not those who imagine the elements to be the only practical part of grammar, suppose it irrelevant to speak of the origin, progress, and importance of the study, and of the rise and character of some of the methods and books by means of which it has been pursued. My remarks will probably be more intelligible, if reduced to distinct heads.

### I. *Of the origin and utility of language in general.*

Revelation informs us that our first progenitor was not only endowed with the faculty of speech, but, as it would appear, actually incited by the Deity to exert that faculty in giving names to the objects by which he was surrounded. “Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air; and *brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them*: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.” Gen. ii. 19. Subsequent to this, is the account of Eve’s creation. But, in the preceding chapter, the Deity is represented as *speaking unto them both*, with reference to dominion over the other creatures, &c.; so that the order of the events cannot be clearly inferred from the order of the narration. The manner of this communication may also be a subject of doubt. Whether it was or was not made by a voice of words, may be questioned. Plato attributes the primitive words of the first language to a divine origin; and Dr. Wilson says, “The transition from silence to speech, implies an effort of the understanding too great for man.

Language is either oral or written. Writing is generally considered an artificial invention, and supposed to have been wholly unknown in the early ages of the world. Its antiquity however, is great. Of this I shall presently state what is known,

The peculiar nature or power of language is a point worthy of our consideration. Words are in themselves but audible signs or arbitrary symbols used, by common consent, as significant of our ideas or thoughts. But so well are they fitted to be made at will the medium of mental conference, that nothing else can be conceived to equal them for this purpose. Yet it does not follow that they who have the greatest knowledge and command of words, have all that they could desire in this respect. For language is in its own nature but an imperfect instrument, and even when tuned with the greatest skill, will often be found inadequate to convey the impression with which the mind may labor. Some, however, may say, that this imperfection is but an incident of the common weakness or ignorance of human nature; and that if a man always knew what to say to another, in order to persuade or confute, to encourage or frighten him, no insufficiency of this kind would ever be felt or thought of. This also is plausible; but is the imperfection less for being sometimes traceable to an ulterior source? The best and the wisest of men confess the inadequacy of language, and deplore its misuse; yet, whatever may be its defects or abuses, it is almost the only medium for the communication of thought and the diffusion of knowledge. Bishop Butler remarks, in his *Analogy of Religion*, (a most valuable work, in a defective style), "The imperfections attending the only method by which nature enables and directs us to communicate our thoughts to each other, are innumerable. Language is, in its very nature, inadequate, ambiguous, liable to abuse even from negligence, and so liable to it from design, that every man can deceive and betray by it."

As words abstractly considered are empty and vain, being in their nature mere signs or tokens which derive all their value and power from the ideas and feelings which they suggest, it is evident, that he who would either speak or write well, must be furnished with something more than a knowledge of sounds and letters. Words fitly spoken are indeed both precious and beautiful—"like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

But it is not for him whose soul is dark, whose designs are selfish, whose affections are dead, or whose thoughts are vain, to say, with the son of Amram, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." It is not for him to exhibit the excellency of speech, because he cannot feel its power. It is not for him, whatever be the theme, to convince the judgment with deductions of reason, to fire the imagination with glowing imagery, or win with graceful words the willing ear of taste. His name shall never be enrolled in the list of those whose language has conferred either instruction or delight.

Man was made for society; and, from the first period of human existence, the race were social. Monkish seclusion is manifestly unnatural; and the wild independence of the savage, is properly denominated a state of nature, only in contradistinction from that state in which the arts are cultivated. But to civilized life, or that which is in any degree social, language is absolutely necessary. There is therefore no danger that the language of any nation shall fall into disuse, till the people by whom it is spoken, shall either adopt some other, or become themselves extinct. When the latter event occurs, as is the case with the ancient, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the language, if preserved at all from oblivion, becomes the more permanent; because the causes which are constantly tending to improve or deteriorate every living language, have ceased to operate upon those which are learned only from ancient books. The inflections which compose the declensions and conjugations of the dead languages must remain forever as they are. When a nation changes its language, as did our forefathers in Britain, producing by a slow amalgamation of materials drawn from various tongues a new one differing from all, the first stages of its grammar will of course be chaotic and rude. Uniformity springs from the steady application of rules; and polish is the work of taste and refinement. We may easily err by following the example of our



early writers with more reverence than judgment; nor is it possible for us to do justice to the grammarians, whether early or late, without a knowledge both of the history and of the present state of this science. Indulge therefore a rapid glance at a few circumstances remote in time, yet nearer to the present purpose than that trodden and debated ground with which we are more familiar.

Some have supposed that the formation of the first language must have been very slow and gradual. But of this we have no proof; nor is it possible now to ascertain what degree of perfection language at the first possessed. But, as languages are now known to improve in proportion to the improvement of society in civilization and intelligence, and as we do not suppose the first inhabitants of the earth to have been savages, it seems a plausible conjecture, that the primeval tongue was at least sufficient for all the ordinary intercourse of civilized men, and that in many instances human speech subsequently declined far below its original standard.

The analogy of words in the different languages has been thought by many to be sufficiently frequent and clear to suggest the idea of their common origin. Their differences are indeed great, but perhaps not greater than the differences in the several races of men, all of whom, as revelation teaches, sprung from one common stock. From the same source we learn, that till the year of the world 1844, "The whole world was of one language, and of one speech." At that period the whole world of mankind consisted only of the descendants of the eight souls who had been saved in the ark, and so many of the eight as had survived the flood one hundred and eighty-eight years. Then occurred that remarkable intervention of the Deity, in which he was pleased to confound their language, so that they could not understand one another's speech, and were consequently scattered abroad upon the face of the earth. This, however, in the opinion of many learned men, does not prove the immediate formation of any new languages. But, whether new languages were thus immediately formed or not,

the event, in all probability, laid the foundation for that diversity which subsequently obtained among the languages of the different nations which sprung from the dispersion ; and it may be regarded as the remote cause of the differences which now exist. But for the immediate origin of the peculiar characteristic differences which distinguish the various languages now known, we are not able with much certainty to account. Nor is there even much plausibility in the speculations of those grammarians who have attempted to explain the order and manner in which the declensions, the moods, the tenses, or other leading features of any language, were first introduced. For instance : Neilson's *Theory of the Moods*, published in the *Classical Journal* of 1819, though it exhibits ingenuity and learning, is liable to the strong objection, that it proceeds on the supposition that the moods of English verbs, and of several other derivative tongues, were invented in a certain order by persons not speaking a language learned chiefly from their fathers, but uttering a new one as necessity prompted. But when did this happen ? That no date is given, the reader regrets, but he cannot marvel.

By what successive changes the minor parts of speech have become what we now find them, the etymologist may often show to our entire satisfaction. But the utility of his curious inquiries may even here be overrated ; and whenever he ventures into the regions of conjecture, or allows himself to be reduced from the path of practical instruction, his errors are obstinate, and his guidance is dangerous. Men fond of such speculations, and able to support them with show of learning, have done more to unsettle the science of grammar, and to divert ingenious teachers from the best methods of instruction, than all other visionaries put together.

Of the art of writing, in which the science of grammar originated, we are not able to trace the commencement. Different nations have claimed the honor of this invention ; and it is not decided among learned men, to whom, or to what country, it belongs. The writings delivered to the Israelites

by Moses, are more ancient than any others now known. In the thirty-first chapter of Exodus, it is said, that God "gave unto Moses upon mount Sinai two tables of testimony, tables of stone, *written with the finger of God.*" But these divine testimonies, thus miraculously written, do not appear to have been the first writing; for Moses had been previously commanded to write an account of the victory over Amalek, "for a memorial in a book." Ex. xvii. 14.

The time at which Cadmus introduced this art into Greece, cannot be precisely ascertained. There is no reason to believe it was antecedent to the time of Moses; some chronologists make it between two and three centuries later. Nor is it very probable that Cadmus invented the sixteen letters of which he is said to have made use. His whole story is so wild a fable that nothing certain can be inferred from it. Sent in search of what he was destined never to find, yet meeting with the most unexpected things; after a series of wonderful achievements and bitter misfortunes, loaded with grief and infirm with age, he prayed the gods to release him from his distresses, and was changed into a serpent. Posterity, however, have made him some amends, by ascribing to him the invention of letters—and accounting him the worthy benefactor to whom the world owes the inestimable benefits derived from literature. I would not willingly rob him of this honor. But I must confess, there is no feature of the story, which I can conceive to give any countenance to his claim; except that as the great progenitor of the race of authors, his sufferings correspond well with the calamities of which that unfortunate generation have always so largely partaken.

The benefits of this invention, if it may be considered such, are certainly very great. In oral discourse the graces of elegance are more lively and attractive, but well-written books are the grand instructors of mankind, the most enduring monuments of human greatness, and the proudest achievements of human intellect. "The chief glory of a nation," says Dr. Johnson, "arises from its authors." Literature is important

in as much as it is subservient to objects of the very highest concern. Religion and morality, liberty and government, fame and happiness, are alike interested in the cause of letters. It was a saying of Pope Pius II. that common men should esteem learning as silver, noblemen value it as gold, and princes prize it as jewels. The uses of learning are seen in every thing that is not itself useless. It cannot be overrated, but where it is perverted; and whenever that occurs, the remedy is to be sought by opposing learning to learning, till the truth be manifest, and that which is reprehensible be made to appear so. Every man ought to feel himself interested in whatever concerns the welfare of his race; and, by those who have attained to a right understanding of any of the great questions in which that welfare is involved, argument should be pressed home to conviction, till every false doctrine stand refuted, and every false pretender exposed and neglected; then shall science honor them that honor her, and all her triumphs be told, all her instructions be recorded, in words that cannot be condemned.

## II. *Of the origin and history of the English language.*

In order that we may set a just value upon the literary labors of those who gave particular attention to the culture of the English language in former times, and that we may the better judge of the credibility of modern pretensions to further improvement, it seems necessary to know something of the course of events through which its acknowledged melioration in earlier days took place. For, as Bacon quotes Aristotle, "*Qui respiciunt ad pauca, de facili pronunciant.*" He that takes a narrow view, easily makes up his mind. But what is any opinion worth, if further knowledge of facts can confute it?

Whatsoever is successively varied, and has either beginning or end of existence, may have also its particular history, if the

opportunity for writing it be not neglected. But such is the levity of mankind, that things of great moment are often left without memorial, while the hand of literature is busy to beguile the world with fictions vain, with prodigies and lies. The rude and cursory languages of barbarous nations, till the genius of grammar arise to their rescue, are among those transitory things which unsparing time hurries irrecoverably to oblivion. Tradition knows not what they were, for of their changes she makes no account. Philosophy tells us they are resolved into the variable, fleeting breath of the successive generations of those by whom they were spoken; whose kindred fate it was, to pass away unnoticed and nameless, lost in the elements from which they sprung.

Upon the history of the English language, darkness thickens as we tread back the course of time. We perceive, that, for a twofold reason, the subject of our inquiry becomes, at every step, more difficult and less worthy. We have now a range of English literature, both extensive and luminous; and though many modern writers, and even writers on grammar, are comparatively very deficient in style, it is safe to affirm that the English language in general has never been written or spoken with more propriety and elegance, than in the present age. Modern English we read with facility. Hence the best method of acquainting one's self practically with the history of the language, must be, to read some of our older authors in retrograde order, till the style employed at times more and more remote, become intelligible, and in some degree familiar to us. Pursued in this way, the study will be less difficult; and the labor of the curious inquirer, which may be suspended at pleasure, will be better repaid, than if he proceed in the order of history, and attempt at first the Saxon remains.

The value of a language as an object of study, depends chiefly on the character of the books it contains, and secondarily on its connexion with others more worthy to be thoroughly known. The twofold reason to which I have alluded, as being calculated soon to discourage research, is the obvious

fact, that as our language took its rise during the barbarism of the dark ages, the books through which its early history must be traced, are not only few and meagre, but, in respect to grammar, unsettled and diverse. It is not to be expected that inquiries of this kind will ever engage the attention of any very considerable number of persons. Over the minds of the reading public, the attractions of novelty hold a much greater influence, than any thing that is to be discovered in the dusk of antiquity. All old books contain a greater or less number of obsolete words and antiquated modes of expression, which puzzle the reader, and call him too frequently to his glossary. And even the most common terms, when they appear in their ancient orthography, are often so disguised as not to be readily recognized. These circumstances (the last of which should be a caution to us against innovations in spelling) retard the progress of the reader, impose a labor too great for the ardor of his curiosity, and soon dispose him to rest satisfied with an ignorance, which, being general, is not likely to expose him to censure. For these reasons, ancient authors are little read; and the real antiquary is considered a man of odd habits, who, by a singular propensity, is led into studies both unfashionable and fruitless—a man who ought to have been born in the days of old, that he might have spoken the language he is so curious to know, and have appeared in the costume of an age better suited to his taste.

But learning is ever curious to explore the records of time, as well as the regions of space; and wherever her institutions flourish, she will amass her treasures, and spread them before her votaries. Difference of languages she easily overcomes; but the leaden reign of unlettered ignorance defies her scrutiny. Hence of one period of the world's history she ever speaks with horror—that long night of apostacy during which, like a lone Sibyl, she hid her precious relics in solitary cells, and fleeing from degraded christendom, sought refuge with the eastern caliphs. “The decline of true religion carried with it almost every vestige of civil liberty, of classical literature, and

of scientific knowledge; and it will generally be found in experience that they must all stand or fall together." In the tenth century, beyond which we find nothing that bears much resemblance to the English language, this mental darkness appears to have gathered to its deepest obscurity, and, at this period, England was sunk as low in ignorance, superstition, and depravity, as any other part of Europe.

The English language gradually varies, as we trace it back, and becomes at length identified with the Anglo-Saxon; that is, with the dialect spoken by the Saxons after their settlement in England. These Saxons were a fierce, warlike, unlettered people from Germany; whom the ancient Britons had invited to their assistance against the Picts and Scots. Cruel and ignorant, like their Gothic kindred who had overrun the Roman empire, they came not for the good of others, but to accommodate themselves. They accordingly seized the country, destroyed or enslaved the ancient inhabitants, or more probably, drove the remnant of them into the mountains of Wales. Of Welsh or Ancient British words, Burke enumerates but one hundred and eleven in our language; and Dr. Johnson, who makes them ninety-five, argues from their almost total absence, that the Saxons could not have mingled at all with these people, or even have retained them in vassalage.

The Saxons entered Britain in the year 449. But what was the form of their language at that time, cannot now be known. It was a dialect of the Gothic or Teutonic; which is considered the parent of all the northern tongues of Europe, except some few of Slavonian origin. The only remaining monument of the Gothic language is a copy of the Gospels preserved at Upsal, and called from its embellishment, *the Silver Book*. It has been three times printed in England. We possess not yet in this country all the advantages which may be enjoyed by literary men in the land of our ancestors; but the art of printing is fast equalizing unto all civilized nations the privilege of drinking at the fountains of knowledge.

It is neither liberal nor just to argue unfavorably of the intellectual or the moral condition of any remote age or country, merely from our own ignorance of it. It is true, we can derive from no quarter a favorable opinion of the state of England after the Saxon invasion, and during the tumultuous and bloody government to the heptarchy. But I will not darken the picture through design. If justice were done to the few names—to Gildas the wise, the memorialist of his country's sufferings and censor of the nation's depravity, who appears a solitary star in the night of the sixth century—to the venerable Bede, the greatest theologian, best scholar, and only historian of the seventh—to Alcuin, the abbot of Canterbury, the luminary of the eighth—to Alfred the Great, the glory of the ninth, great as a prince, and greater as a scholar, seen in the evening twilight of an age in which the clergy could not read;—if justice were done to all such, we might find something, even in these dark and rugged times, if not to soften the grimness of the portrait, at least to give greater distinctness of feature.

In tracing the history of our language, Dr. Johnson, who does little more than give examples, cites as his first specimen of ancient English, a portion of king Alfred's paraphrase in imitation of Boethius. But this language of Alfred's is not English; but rather, as the learned doctor himself considered it, an example of the Anglo-Saxon in its highest state of purity. This dialect was first changed by admixture with words chiefly derived from the Danish and the Norman; and, still being comparatively rude and meagre, afterwards received large accessions from the Latin, the French, the Greek, the Dutch—till, by gradual changes, which the etymologist may exhibit, there was at length produced a language bearing a sufficient resemblance to the present English to deserve to be called English at this day. The formation of our language cannot with propriety be dated earlier than the thirteenth century. It was then that a free and voluntary amalgamation of its chief constituent materials took place; and this was somewhat ear-



lier than we date the revival of learning. The English of the thirteenth century is scarcely intelligible to the modern reader. Dr. Johnson calls it a kind of intermediate diction, neither Saxon nor English ; and says, that Sir John Gower, who wrote in the latter part of the fourteenth century, was the first of our authors who can properly be said to have written English. Contemporary with Gower, the father of English poetry, was the still greater poet, his disciple Chaucer ; who embraced many of the tenets of Wickliffe, and imbibed something of the spirit of the reformation, which was now begun.

The literary history of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is full of interest ; for it is delightful to trace the progress of great and obvious improvement. The reformation of religion and the revival of learning were nearly simultaneous. Yet individuals may have acted a conspicuous part in the latter, who had little to do with the former ; for great learning does not necessarily imply great piety, though (as Dr. Johnson observes) "the Christian religion always implies or produces a certain degree of civility and learning." Peculiar honor is due to those who lead the way in whatever advances human happiness. And surely our just admiration of the character of the reformers must be not a little enhanced, when we consider what they did for letters as well as for the church. Learning does not consist in useless jargon, or mere words ; else the seventeen folios of St. Thomas Aquinas, the angelical doctor of the thirteenth century, and the profound disputations of his great rival Duns Scotus the subtile, for which they were revered in their own age, had not gained them the contempt of all posterity. From such learning the lucid reasoning of the reformers delivered the halls of instruction. The school divinity of the middle ages passed away before the presence of that which these men learned from the Bible, as did in a later age the Aristotelian philosophy before that which Bacon drew from nature.

Towards the latter part of the fourteenth century, Wickliffe furnished the first entire translation of the Bible into English. In like manner did the Germans, a hundred and fifty years after, receive it in their tongue from the hands of Luther ; who says, that at twenty years of age, he himself had not seen it in any language. Wickliffe's English style is elegant for the age in which he lived, yet very different from what is elegant now. To give specimens, would detain me too long upon a topic which I fear is not very interesting. This first English translation of the Bible, being made about a hundred years before the introduction of printing into England, could not have been very extensively circulated. A large specimen of it may be seen in Dr. Johnson's history of the English language.

The changes which our language has undergone within the last three hundred years, may easily be traced by any one who can read. But it ought to be known, that the printers have taken considerable liberty in modernizing the orthography of Shakspeare, and other old authors still popular. How far such liberty is justifiable, it is difficult to say. It is very desirable that the orthography of our language should be made uniform and remain permanent. Great alterations cannot suddenly be introduced, and there is in stability an advantage which will counterbalance that of a slow approximation to regularity.

English books began to be printed in the latter part of the fifteenth century ; at which time the press threw open the flood gates of knowledge, the streams of which are now pouring forth, in a copious, increasing, but too often turbid tide, upon all the civilized nations of the earth. This mighty engine afforded a means by which superior minds could act more efficiently and more extensively upon society in general. And thus, by the exertions of genius adorned with learning, our native tongue has been made the polished vehicle of the most interesting truths, and of the most important discoveries ; and has become a language copious, strong, refined, and ca-

pable of no inconsiderable degree of harmony. Nay, it is esteemed by some, who claim to be competent judges, to be the strongest, the richest, the most elegant, and the most susceptible of sublime imagery, of all the languages in the world.

### III. *Of the grammatical study of the English language.*

The English language may now be regarded as the common inheritance of about fifty millions of people; who are at least as highly distinguished for virtue, intelligence, and enterprise, as any other equal portion of the earth's population. All these are more or less interested in the purity, permanency, and right use of that language; in as much as it is to be the medium of mental intercourse with others for them and their children, and the vehicle of all they value in the reversion of ancestral honor, or in the transmission of their own. It is even impertinent, to tell a man of any respectability, that the study of this his native language is an object of great importance and interest: if he does not, from these most obvious considerations, feel it to be so, the suggestion will be less likely to convince him, than to give offence, as conveying an implicit censure. Every person who has any ambition to appear respectable among people of education, whether in conversation, in correspondence, in public speaking, or in print, must be aware of the absolute necessity of a competent knowledge of the language in which he attempts to express his thoughts. Many a ludicrous anecdote is told of persons venturing to use words of which they did not know the proper application; many a ridiculous blunder has been published to the lasting disgrace of the writer; and so intimately does every man's reputation for sense depend upon his skill in the use of language, that it is scarcely possible to acquire the one without the other. Who can tell how much of his own good or ill success, how much of the favor or disregard with which he himself has been treated, may have depended upon that skill or deficiency in grammar, of which, as often as he has

either spoken or written, he must have afforded a certain and constant evidence?

To excel in grammar, is but to know better than others wherein grammatical excellence consists; and, as this excellence, whether in the thing itself or in him that attains to it, is merely comparative, there can be no fixed point of perfection beyond which such learning may not be carried. In speaking or writing to different persons, and on different subjects, it is necessary to vary one's style with great nicety of address; and in nothing does true genius more conspicuously appear, than in the facility with which it adopts the most appropriate expressions, leaving the critic no word to amend. Such facility of course supposes an intimate knowledge of all words in common use, and also of the principles on which they are to be combined. With a language which we are daily in the practice of hearing, speaking, reading, and writing, we may certainly acquire no inconsiderable acquaintance, without the formal study of its rules. All the true principles of grammar were presumed to be known before they were written for the aid of learners; nor have they acquired any independent authority by being recorded in a book, and denominated grammar. The teaching of them, however, has tended in no small degree to settle and establish the construction of the language, to improve the style of English writers, and to enable us to ascertain with more clearness the true standard of grammatical purity. He who learns only by rote, may speak the words or phrases which he has thus acquired; and he who has the genius to discern intuitively what is regular and proper, may have further aid from the analogies which he thus discovers; but he who would add to such acquisitions the satisfaction of knowing what is right, must make the principles of language his study.

To produce an able and elegant writer, may require something more than a knowledge of grammar rules; yet it is argument enough in favor of those rules, that without a knowledge of them no elegant and able writer is produced. Who

that considers the infinite number of phrases which words in their various combinations may form, and the utter impossibility that they should even be recognized individually for the purposes of instruction or criticism, but must see the absolute necessity of dividing words into classes, and of showing by general rules of formation and construction the laws to which custom subjects them, or from which she allows them in particular instances to deviate? The art of writing and speaking must continue to be learned by some persons; because it is of indispensable use to society. And the only question is, whether children and youth shall acquire it by a regular process of study and method of instruction, or be left to glean it solely from their own occasional observation of the manner in which other people speak and write. The practical solution of this question belongs chiefly to parents and guardians. But if past experience and the history of education be taken for guides, the study will not be neglected, and the method of inculcation will become an object of particular inquiry and solicitude.

English grammar is, or ought to be, a regular and well-digested art, or practical science; every part of which must be true, and, of course, consistent with every other part of the entire system. It is as susceptible of clearness and consistency of expression, as any other branch of instruction. Like every other art, it must have its technical terms, all of which should be plainly, briefly, and handsomely defined; all its rules and explanations should be delivered with the greatest possible accuracy; the book by which it is taught, should certainly contain no errors either of thought or expression, but such as are exhibited for correction; and its style throughout should be modern, neat, and perspicuous. How far any English grammarian has attained to these first requisites of a good grammar, I shall not now say; certain it is, than many have fallen lamentably short of them.

The English language ought to be learned at school, in the same manner as all other languages are; by the study of its

grammar, accompanied with regular exercises of parsing, correcting, pointing, and scanning; and by the perusal of its writers, accompanied with stated exercises in composition and elocution. In books of criticism, our language is more abundant than any other. Some of the best of these the student should peruse, as soon as he can understand and relish them. Such a course, pursued with regularity and diligence, will be found the most direct way of acquiring an English style at once pure, correct, and elegant.

But in all untrained and vulgar minds, ambition of excelling in such things is only a dormant or very weak principle. Hence many are lamentably careless of what they utter, both as it respects the matter, and the manner; and some seem ever prone to the imitation of low example—to the practice of every abuse of which language is susceptible. Well might the poet exclaim,

“Sacred Interpreter of human thought,  
How few respect or use thee as they ought!”

COWPER.

Nay, while the most liberal of our lexicographers notice many terms but to censure them, and omit still more as being beneath their notice, we have had, even among professed grammarians, men who could count the favor of the vulgar at the expense of all the daughters of Mnemosyne. Hence the enormous insult to learning, conveyed in the following scornful quotations:—

“Grammarians, go to your *tailors* and *shoemakers*, and learn from them the rational art of constructing your grammars!”—*Neef's Method of Education*, p. 62.

“From a labyrinth without a clew, in which the most enlightened scholars of Europe have mazed themselves and misguided others, the author ventures to turn aside.”—*Cardell's Gram.* 12mo. p. 15.

“The nations of *unlettered men* so adapted their language to philosophic truth, that all physical and intellectual

research can find no essential rule to reject or change."—*Ibid.* p. 91.

I have shown that the nations of unlettered men are among that portion of the earth's population, upon whose language the genius of Grammar has never yet condescended to look down:—That people who make no pretensions to learning, can furnish better models or instructions than the most enlightened scholars, is an opinion which ought not to be disturbed by argument.

If every thing that has been taught under the name of grammar, is to be considered as belonging to the science, it will be impossible ever to determine in what estimation the study of it ought to be held; for all that has ever been urged either for or against it, may, upon such a principle, be proved by a reference to different authorities and irreconcilable opinions. But all who are studious to know and content to follow the fashion established by the concurrent authority of the learned, may at least have some standard to refer to; and if a grammarian's rules be based upon this authority, it must be considered the exclusive privilege of the unlearned to despise them—as it is of the unbred to contemn the rules of civility. Who is so destitute of sense as to deny, that a graceful and easy conversation in the private circle, a fluent and agreeable delivery in public speaking, a ready and natural utterance in reading, a pure and elegant style in composition, are accomplishments of a very high order? And yet of all these, the proper study of English grammar is the true foundation. This would never be denied or doubted, if young people did not find, under some other name, better models and more efficient instruction, than what was practised on them for grammar in the school-room. No disciple of an able grammarian can speak ill of grammar, unless he belong to that class of knaves who vilify what they despair to reach.

By taking advantage of the ductility of childhood, intelligent parents and judicious teachers may exercise over the studies, opinions, and habits of youth a strong and salutary control;

and it will seldom be found in experience, that those who have been early taught to consider grammatical learning as worthy and manly, will change their opinion in after life. But the study of grammar is not so enticing that it may be disparaged in the hearing of the young, without injury. What would be the effect of the following sentence, which I quote from a late well-written religious homily? "The pedagogue and his dunce may exercise their wits correctly enough, in the way of grammatical analysis, on some splendid argument, or burst of eloquence, or thrilling descant, or poetic rapture, to the strain and soul of which not a fibre in their nature would yield a vibration."—*N. Y. Observer*, vol. ix. p. 73.

Would not the bright boy who heard this from the lips of his reverend minister, be apt the next day to grow weary of the parsing lesson required by his schoolmaster? And yet what truth is there in it? One can no more judge of the fitness of language without regard to the meaning conveyed by it, than of the fitness of a suit of clothes without knowing for whom they were intended. The grand clew to the proper application of all syntactical rules, is *the sense*; and as any composition is faulty which does not rightly deliver the author's meaning, so every solution of a word or sentence is necessarily erroneous, in which that meaning is not carefully noticed and literally preserved. To parse rightly and fully, is nothing else than to understand rightly and explain fully; and whatsoever is well expressed, it is a shame either to misunderstand or to misinterpret.

This study, when properly conducted and liberally pursued, has an obvious tendency to dignify the whole character. How can he be a man of refined literary taste, who cannot speak and write his native language grammatically? And who will deny that every degree of improvement in literary taste tends to brighten and embellish the whole intellectual nature? The several powers of the mind are not so many distinct and separable agents which are usually brought into exercise one by one; and even if they were, there might be found, in a judi-



cious prosecution of this study, a healthful employment for them all. The imagination, indeed, has nothing to do with the elements of grammar ; but in the exercise of composition, young fancy may spread her wings as soon as they are fledged ; and for this exercise the previous course of discipline will have furnished both language, taste, and sentiment.

The regular grammatical study of our language is a thing of recent origin. Fifty or sixty years ago, such an exercise was scarcely attempted in any of the schools, either in this country or in England. Of this fact we have abundant evidence both from books, and from the testimony of our venerable fathers yet living. How often have these presented this as an apology for their own deficiencies, and endeavored to excite us to greater diligence, by contrasting our opportunities with theirs ! Is there not truth, is there not power in the appeal ? And are we not bound to avail ourselves of the privileges which they have provided, to build upon the foundations which their wisdom has laid ; and to carry forward the work of improvement ? Institutions can do nothing for us, unless the love of learning preside over and prevail in them. The discipline of our schools can never approach perfection, till those who conduct, and those who frequent them, are strongly actuated by that disposition of mind, which generously aspires to all attainable excellence. " If there be *any virtue*, if there be *any praise*, think on these things." Phil. iv. 8.

To rouse this laudable spirit in the minds of our youth, and to satisfy its demands whenever it appears, ought to be the leading objects with those to whom is committed the important business of instruction. A dull teacher, wasting time in a schoolroom with a parcel of stupid or indolent boys, knows nothing of the satisfaction either of doing his own duty, or of exciting others to the performance of theirs. He settles down in a regular routine of humdrum exercises, and dreading as an inconvenience even such change as proficiency in his pupils must bring on ; and is well content to do little good for little money, in a profession which he honors with his services

merely to escape starvation. He has, however, one merit: he pleases his patrons, and is the only man that can; for they are of that class who dread the expense even of a schoolbook, and always judge those things to be cheapest which cost the least and least the longest. What such a man thinks of English Grammar, I shall not stop to ask.

The grammatical study of our language was early and strongly recommended by Locke, and other writers on education, whose character gave additional weight to an opinion which they enforced with the clearest arguments. But, either for want of a good grammar, or for default of teachers skilled in the subject and sensible of its importance, the general neglect, so long complained of as an imperfection in our methods of education, has been but recently and partially obviated. Not thirty years ago, that eminent teacher, Dr. William Barrow of London, repeated the complaint which Locke had made more than a century before, and alleged that in the public schools of England, the language was not frequently read, and was still less frequently written. He states the consequence: "A classical scholar too often has his English style to form when he should communicate his acquisitions to the world. In some instances, it is never formed with success; and the defects of his expression either deter him from appearing before the public at all, or at least counteract in a great degree the influence of his work and bring ridicule upon the author."—*Barrow's Essays*, p. 87. These evils, he suggests, might easily be prevented or diminished by the regular study of English grammar.

I am not of opinion that it is expedient to press this study to much extent, if at all, on those whom poverty or incapacity may have destined to situations in which they will never hear of it afterwards. The course of nature cannot be controlled; and fortune does not permit us to prescribe the same course of discipline for all. To speak the language which they have learned without study, and to read and write for the most

common purposes of life, may be education enough for those who can be raised no higher. But, favored as our country is, with great facilities for carrying forward the work of improvement in every thing which can contribute to national glory and prosperity, I would, in conclusion of this topic, submit—that a critical knowledge of our common language is a subject worthy of the particular attention of all who have the genius and the opportunity to attain it—that on the purity and propriety with which American authors write this language, the reputation of our national literature greatly depends—that in the preservation of it from all changes which ignorance may admit or affectation invent, we ought to unite, as having one common interest—that a fixed and settled orthography is of great importance, as a means of preserving the etymology, history, and identity of words—that a grammar, freed from errors and defects, and embracing a complete code of definitions and illustrations, rules and exercises, is of primary importance to every student, and a great aid to teachers—that as the vices of speech as well as of manners are contagious, it becomes those who have the care of youth, to be masters of the language in its purity and elegance, and to avoid as much as possible every thing that is reprehensible either in thought or expression.

#### IV. *Of the best method of teaching Grammar.*

It is hardly to be supposed that any person can have a very clear conviction of the best method of doing a thing, who shall not first have acquired a pretty correct and adequate notion of the thing to be done. Arts must be taught by artists; sciences by learned men; and if Grammar is the science of words, the art of writing and speaking well, the best speakers and writers will be the best teachers of it, if they choose to confine their attention to so humble an employment. For, without disparagement of the many worthy men whom choice or necessity has made schoolmasters, it may be admitted that the low estimation in which schoolkeeping is held, does mostly ex-

clude from it the first order of talents and scholarship. It is one strong proof of this, that we have heretofore been content to receive our digests of English grammar, either from men who had had no practical experience in the labors of a school-room, or from miserable modifiers and abridgers, destitute alike of learning and industry, judgment and skill.

But to have a correct and adequate notion of English grammar, and of the best method of learning or teaching it, is no light attainment. The simple definition in which the general idea is embraced, "Grammar is the art of writing and speaking correctly," however useful in order to fix the learner's conception, can scarcely give him a better knowledge of the thing itself, than he would have of the art of painting, when he had learned from Dr. Webster, that it is "the art of representing to the eye, by means of figures and colors, any object of sight, and sometimes emotions of the mind." The first would no more enable him to write a sonnet, than the second to take his master's likeness. The force of this remark extends to all the technical divisions, definitions, rules, and arrangements of grammar; the learner may commit them all to memory, and know but very little about the art. This fact, too obvious to be questioned, has been made the basis of the strongest argument ever raised against the study of grammar, according to the ordinary technical method of teaching it. It has led men, even of the highest talents, to doubt the expediency of that method, and to invent others by which they hoped to be more successful. The futility of the old accident has been inferred from it, and urged, even in some well-written books, with all the plausibility of a fair and legitimate deduction. The hardships of children, compelled to learn what they did not understand, have been bewailed in prefaces and reviews; and the sympathies of nature, with accumulated prejudices, have been excited against that method of teaching grammar, which after all will be found in experience to be essentially the easiest, the shortest and the best. I mean the plain didactic method of definition and example, rule and praxis.

We admit that definitions and rules committed to memory and not reduced to practice, will never enable any one to speak and write correctly. But does it follow, that to study grammar by learning its principles, or to teach it technically by formal lessons, is of no real utility? Surely not—for the same admission must be made with respect to the definitions and rules of every practical science in the world; and the technology of grammar is even more essential to a true knowledge of the subject, than that of almost any other art. "To proceed upon principles at first," says Dr. Barrow, "is the most compendious method of attaining every branch of knowledge; and the truths impressed upon the mind in the years of childhood, are ever afterwards the most firmly remembered, and the most readily applied."—*Essays*, p. 84.

Reading, as I have said, is a part of grammar; and it is a part which must of course precede what is called in the schools the study of grammar. Any person who can read, can learn from a book such simple facts as are within his comprehension; and we have it on the authority of Dr. Adam, that "The principles of grammar are the first abstract truths which a young mind can comprehend."—*Pref. to Gram.*

The objection drawn from the alleged inefficiency of this method, lies solely against the practice of those teachers who disjoin the principles and the exercises of the art; and who, either through ignorance or negligence, impose only such tasks as leave the pupil to suppose, that the committing to memory of definitions and rules, constitutes the whole business of grammar. Such a method is no less absurd in itself, than contrary to the practice of the best teachers from the very origin of the study. The epistle prefixed to King Henry's Grammar almost three centuries ago, and the very sensible preface to the old British Grammar, republished in this city in 1784, give evidence enough that a better method of teaching has long been known. Nay, in my opinion, the very best method cannot be essentially different from that which has been longest in use, and probably most known. In etymology

and syntax, the pupil should be alternately exercised in learning small portions of his book, and then applying them in parsing or correcting, till the whole is rendered familiar. Something like this has long been practised, but seldom with sufficient regard to accuracy and order. It should be understood, that in parsing any particular word, or part of speech, there are just so many things to be said of it, and to be said in the best manner: so that whoever tells fewer; omits something requisite; whoever says more, inserts something irrelevant; and whoever states it otherwise, either blunders in point of fact, or impairs the expression. The practice of correcting false syntax orally, by regular and logical forms, and the writing-out of a series of exercises embracing all the parts of grammar, will also be of essential service.

Murray evidently intended that his book of exercises should be constantly used with his grammar; but he made the examples in the former so dull and prolix, that I have never yet heard of a boy who had gone through them all agreeably to his direction. The publishing of them in a separate volume, has probably given rise to the absurd practice of endeavoring to teach his grammar without them. The whole volume though much too large for common schools is insufficient for a proper elucidation of the subject; because it lacks variety, and, like his grammar, leaves many of the most important doctrines untouched. Of course, all those abridgements in which only certain parts of the two books are combined, are still more deficient. The forms of parsing and correcting, which this author furnishes, are also misplaced; and, when found by the learner, are of little use. They are so verbose, awkward, irregular, and deficient, that the pupil must be a dull boy, or utterly ignorant of grammar, if he cannot express the facts extemporaneously in better English. When we consider how exceedingly important it is, that the business of a school should proceed without loss of time, and that in the oral exercises of parsing and correcting, each pupil should go through his part promptly,

clearly, correctly, and fully, we cannot think it a light objection that these forms, so often to be repeated, are badly written.

Indulge a brief illustration. First—from his etymological parsing: “O Virtue! how amiable thou art!” Here his form for the word *Virtue* is—“*Virtue* is a *common substantive*, of the *neuter* gender, of the *third* person, in the *singular* number, and the *nominative* case.” It should have been—“*Virtue* is a *common noun*, personified *proper*, of the *second* person, singular number, *feminine* gender, and *nominative* case.” And then the definitions of all these things should have followed. He gives the class of this noun wrong, for virtue addressed becomes an individual;—he gives the gender wrong, and in direct contradiction to what he says of the word, in his section on gender; he gives the person wrong, as may be seen by the pronoun *thou*;—he repeats the definite article three times unnecessarily, and inserts two needless prepositions, making them different where the relation is precisely the same:—and all this, in a sentence of two lines, to tell the properties of the noun *virtue*!—But, in etymological parsing, the definitions explaining the properties of the parts of speech, ought to be regularly and rapidly rehearsed by the pupil, till all of them become perfectly familiar. These the author omits; and, on account of this omission, his whole method of etymological parsing is miserably deficient.

Secondly—from his syntactical parsing: “Vice degrades us.” Here his form for the word *Vice* is—“*Vice* is a *common substantive*, of the *third* person, in the *singular* number, and the *nominative* case.” Now, when the learner is told that this is the syntactical parsing of a noun, and the other the etymological, he will of course conclude, that to advance from the etymology to the syntax of this part of speech, is merely to *omit the gender*—this being the only difference between the two forms. But even this difference had no other origin than Murray's carelessness in preparing his octavo book of exercises—the gender being inserted in the duodecimo. But what then? Is the syntactical parsing of a noun to be pre-

cisely the same as the etymological? Never. But Murray, and all who admire and follow his work, are content to parse many words by halves—making a distinction, and yet often omitting, in both parts of the exercise, every thing which constitutes the difference. He should here have said—"Vice is a common noun, of the third person, singular number, neuter gender, and nominative-case: and is the subject of *degrades*; according to the rule which says, 'A noun or a pronoun which is the subject of a verb, must be in the nominative case.' Because the meaning is—*vice degrades*." This is the whole description of the word with its construction; and to say less, is to leave the matter unfinished.

So far as my observation has extended, the two examples which I have just cited, are a pretty fair specimen of the crude and faltering jargon which a vast majority of our books on grammar put into the mouths of boys under the name of parsing. Some, however, are in this respect more regular and complete, while they have perhaps little merit in other particulars. We have also had many able teachers, who, by prescribing forms of praxis for their own pupils, have remedied in a great measure the embarrassments naturally arising from such a deficiency in their manners, and have taught successfully from books which were neither accurate nor methodical.

Without oral instruction and oral exercises, a correct habit of speaking our language can never be acquired; but written rules and exercises in writing, are perhaps quite as necessary, for the formation of a good style. Wherefore all these should be combined in our course of English grammar; and in order to accomplish both objects at once, the written doctrines should statedly be made the subject of a critical exercise in utterance. So that the boy who is parsing a word or sentence in the hearing of others, may impressively realize, that he is then and there exhibiting his own skill, or deficiency in oral discourse. He should be made to feel that he is bound by every consideration of respect for himself or for those who hear him, to proceed with his explanation and rehearsal in a clear and intelligible manner



without drawling, stopping, hesitating, faltering, omitting, miscalling, reiterating, stuttering, hurrying, slurring, mouth-ing, misquoting, mispronouncing, or any of the thousand faults which render utterance disagreeable and inelegant. It should be strongly impressed upon him, that the grand object of the whole business is his own practical improvement; that a habit of speaking clearly and agreeably is itself one half of the great art of grammar; that to be slow and awkward in parsing, is unpardonable negligence, and culpable waste of time; that to commit blunders in rehearsing grammar, is to speak badly about the art of speaking well; that his recitations must needs be limited to such things as he knows, and must be repeated till he can say them without mistake; finally, that he must be very attentive to the utterance of those who speak well, if he would learn to improve his own. He must not be allowed to forget, that a full and open pronunciation of the long vowel sounds, a clear articulation of the consonants, a forcible and well-placed accent, and a distinct utterance of the unaccented syllables, distinguish the elegant speaker.

The exercise of parsing should be commenced immediately after the first lesson of etymology—the lesson in which are contained the definitions of the ten parts of speech; and should be carried on progressively till it embraces all the doctrines which can be applied in the resolution of sentences. If it be performed according to the method which I am endeavoring to explain, it will soon make the student perfectly familiar with all the primary definitions and rules of grammar. It asks no aid from the dictionary, if the pupil knows the meaning of the words he is parsing; and very little from the teacher, if the definitions and rules are well expressed and well exemplified in the book. It requires of the pupil just enough of thought to keep the mind attentive to what the lips are uttering, while it advances by such easy gradations and constant repetitions, as leave him utterly without excuse, if he does not know what to say. Being neither wholly extemporaneous, nor wholly rehearsed by rote, it has more dignity than a schoolboy's con-

versation, and more ease than a formal recitation; and is therefore an exercise well calculated to induce a habit of uniting correctness with fluency in ordinary speech—a species of elocution as valuable as any other.

Thus would I unite the practice with the theory of grammar; endeavoring to express its principles with all possible perspicuity, purity, and propriety, of diction; retaining, as necessary parts of the subject, those technicalities which the pupil must needs learn in order to understand the disquisitions of grammarians in general; adopting every important feature of that system of doctrines which appears to have been longest and most generally taught; making such improvements as the further progress of our literature, and a minute observation of facts, may warrant or require; and attempting to amend, not so much the grammar of our language with reference to men, as the grammar of our schools, for the advancement of youth. The teacher is presumed to be competent. It is the learner's diction that is to be improved; and this method of instruction will be found well calculated to effect that improvement; because it demands of him not only to answer questions on grammar, but to make a prompt and practical application of what he has just learned.

Of all methods of teaching, this is the best supported by experience; and, whatever objections may have been raised against it, it will probably be found on examination to be the most analogous to nature. It begins with a classification of the words, or elements, which constitute the language, and proceeds to divide further, according to specific differences and qualities, till all the classes, properties, and relations, of the words, in any intelligible sentence, become obvious and determinate; and he to whom these things are known, is a good grammarian. But the disposition of the human mind to generalize the objects of thought, and to follow broad analogies in the use of words, discovers itself early, and seems to be an inherent principle of our nature. Hence, in the language of children and illiterate people, many words are regularly inflected, even

in opposition to the most common usage. It is admitted, that by this method of teaching, attention and memory are more demanded than judgment; and some words may be learned before the ideas represented by them are fully comprehended or the things spoken of are fully understood. But this seems necessarily to arise from the order of nature in the development of the mental faculties; and an acquisition cannot be lightly esteemed, which has signally augmented and improved that faculty on which the pupil's future progress depends.

The memory, indeed, should never be cultivated at the expense of the understanding; as is the case, when the former is tasked with lessons by which the latter is misled and bewildered. But truth, whether fully comprehended or not, has no perplexing inconsistencies. And it is manifest that that which does not in some respect surpass the understanding, can never enlighten it—can never awaken the spirit of inquiry, or satisfy research. He who by study has once stored his memory with the sound language of any true and important doctrine, can never, without some folly or conceit akin to madness, repent of the acquisition. Milton, in his academy, professed to teach things, rather than words; and many others have made plausible profession of the same thing since. But it does not appear, that even in the hands of Milton, the attempt was crowned with any remarkable success.

The vain pretensions of several modern simplifiers, contrivers of machines, charts, tables, picknicks, dialogues, vincula, ocular analyses, inductive exercises, intellectual methods, and new theories, for the purpose of teaching grammar, may serve to deceive the ignorant, to amuse the visionary, and to excite the admiration of the credulous; but none of these inventions has any favorable relation to the improvement of youth in the art of writing and speaking correctly. The definitions and rules which constitute the doctrines of grammar, may be variously expressed, arranged, illustrated, and applied; and, in the expression, arrangement, illustration, and application of them, there may be room for some amendment: but no con-

trivance can ever relieve the pupil from the necessity of committing them thoroughly to memory. The experience of all civilized ages and countries is a confirmation of this ; and the judicious teacher, though he will not shut his eyes to a real improvement, will be cautious of renouncing the practical lessons of hoary experience for the futile notions of a vain projector.

Some have been beguiled with the idea, that great proficiency in grammar was to be made by means of a fanciful method of induction. But if the scheme does not make better writers than are the generality of those who have adopted it, it will be found of little use. By the happy method of Bacon, to lead philosophy into the common walks of life, into the ordinary business and language of men, is to improve the condition of humanity ; but, in teaching grammar, to desert the plain didactic method of definition and example, rule and praxis, and pretend to lead children by philosophic induction into a knowledge of words, is to throw down the ladder of learning, that boys may imagine themselves to ascend it, while they are merely stilting over the low level upon which its fragments are cast.

"The first and highest philosophy," says Puffendorf, "is that which delivers the most accurate and comprehensive definitions of things."—*Law of Nature and of Nations*, p. 1.

But the nature of every general definition or rule is didactic, and not inductive, or exsquisitive. And had this high philosophy been properly applied to the science of grammar, there would have been much less complaint of the difficulty and uncertainty of the study. Murray admits that, "It is easy to advance plausible objections against almost every definition, rule, and arrangement of grammar."—*Svo. Grammar*, p. 59.

But if this is true, as regards his or any other work, the reason of the fact, is far less inherent in the nature of the subject than many suppose. The science has often been unskillfully treated, and never been brought to that perfection of which it is susceptible ; and how can we expect children to de-

duce from a few particulars an accurate notion of general principles and their exceptions, where learned doctors have often fattered?

The chief argument of these inductive grammarians is founded on the principle, that children cannot be instructed by means of any words which they do not understand. This principle is certainly false; else they could never be instructed by words at all. For no child ever fully understands a word, the first time he hears or sees it; and it is rather by frequent repetition and use, than by attention to a dictionary, that the meaning of words in general is fixed in the mind. Hence people make use of many terms which they cannot well explain, just as they do of many things which they cannot well describe. The first perception we have of any word, or other thing, when presented to the ear or the eye, gives us some knowledge of it; and the difference between this knowledge and that which we call an understanding of the word or thing, is, for the most part, only in degree. Definitions, or explanations, are useful; but an understanding of words may be acquired without them, else no man could ever have made a dictionary.

The best instruction is that which ultimately gives the greatest facility and skill in practice; and the right use of words is best taught, by that process which the most effectually conquers inattention, and leaves the learner the least excuse for his ignorance. In the language of some men, there is a vividness, an energy, a power of expression, which penetrates even the soul of dulness, and leaves an impression both of words unknown and of sentiments unfelt before. Such men can teach; but he who kindly accommodates himself to ignorance, shall never be greatly instrumental in removing it.

*V. Of the origin and character of the English grammars.*

The first attempts to teach the grammar of our language appear to have been made chiefly in Latin; and often the two

languages were combined in one book, for the purpose of teaching, sometimes both together, and sometimes the one through the medium of the other. In Ward's preface to Lily's (or King Henry's) grammar, as published in 1793, it is said, "If we look back to the origin of our common Latin grammar, we shall find it was no hasty performance, nor the work of a single person; but composed at different times by several eminent and learned men, till the whole was at length finished, and by the order of King Henry VIII. brought into that form in which it has ever since continued. The *English Introduction* was written by the reverend and learned Dr. John Colet, dean of St. Paul's, for the use of the school he had lately founded there; and was dedicated by him to William Lily, the first high master of that school in the year 1510; for which reason it has usually gone by the name of Paul's Accidence. The substance of it remains the same, as at first; though it has been much altered in the manner of expression, and sometimes the order, with other improvements. The *English Syntax* was the work of Lily, as appears by the title in the most ancient editions, which runs thus: *Gulielmi Lillii Angli Rudimentā*. But it has been greatly improved since his time, both with regard to the method, and an enlargement of double the quantity."

Paul's Accidence is therefore probably the oldest English grammar now extant. In fact, however, it can hardly be called an English grammar; because, though written in antique English, it was chiefly designed for the teaching of Latin. It begins thus: "In speech be these eight parts following: Noun, Pronoun, Verb, Participle, declined; Adverb, Conjunction, Preposition, Interjection, undeclined." This is the old platform of the Latin grammarians; which differs from that of the Greek grammars, only in having no Article, and in separating the Interjection from the class of Adverbs. It was followed by the author of the British grammar, by Priestley, by Buchanan, and others. Dr. Johnson professes to adopt the division, the order, and the terms, "of the common grammarians, without

inquiring whether a fitter distribution might not be found." But, in the Etymology of his grammar, he makes no enumeration of the parts of speech, and treats only of articles, nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and verbs; to which if we add the others, according to the common grammarians, or according to his own dictionary, the number will be ten. And this distribution, which was approved by Dr. Adam, and adopted by Dr. Ash, has been since very extensively followed; as may be seen in the grammars of Harrison, Staniford, Alden, Coar, Peirce, Comly, Jaudon, Ingersoll, Fisk, Greenleaf, Kirkham, Merchant, Bucke, Beck, Maunder, and many others. Dr. Lowth's distribution is the same, except that, in contradiction to the most general usage, he called the participle a verb, and thus made the number to be nine. He also has been followed by many; among whom are Bicknell, Burn, Lennie, Mennye, Murray, Allen, Guy, Churchill, Cobbett, David Blair, Davenport, Wilcox, Russell, Bacon, Lyon, Alger, Flint, Cooper, and Frost. But the last seven of these, and as many more in the preceding list, are confessedly mere modifiers of Murray; and perhaps, in such case, those are the most consistent who have deviated least from the authority they professed to follow.

Some seem to have supposed, that by reducing the number of the parts of speech, and of the rules for their construction, the study of grammar would be rendered more easy and profitable. But this, as would appear from the history of the science, is a mere retrogression towards the rudeness of its earlier stages. It is hardly worth while to dispute, whether there shall be nine parts of speech or ten; and perhaps enough has already been stated, to establish the expediency of assuming the latter number. Every word in the language must be included in some class, and nothing is gained by making the classes larger and less numerous. In all the artificial arrangements of science, distinctions are to be made according to the differences in things; and the simple question here is, what differences among words shall be at first regarded. To overlook, in our primary division, the difference between a verb

and a participle, is merely to reserve for a subdivision, or subsequent explanation, a class of words which most grammarians have recognized as a distinct sort in their original classification.

Several writers on English grammar, seem not to have determined in their own minds, how many parts of speech there ought to be. Among these are Webster, Dalton, Cardell, Green, and Cobb. Dr. Webster, in his *Philosophic Grammar*, made the parts of speech seven; to most of which he gave new names. In the sixth edition of his former grammar, (which, according to his own statement, he voluntarily suppressed, after reading Horne Tooke), he had reckoned only "six; nouns, articles, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, and abbreviations or particles." Dalton also in his grammar, which he dedicated to Horne Tooke, made the parts of speech six, but not the same six. He would have them to be, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions, and prepositions. This writer, like Brightland, Tooke, Fisher, and some few others, insists on it that the articles are adjectives; and so has Dr. Webster fixed them in his late valuable, but not faultless, dictionaries. But Booth, in his "Introduction to an Analytical Dictionary of the English Language," returns them to the class of pronouns; from which he thinks it strange that they were ever separated!

What can be more idle, than for teachers to reject the common classification of words, and puzzle the heads of school-boys with speculations like these? And if we depart from the common scheme, where shall we stop? Some have taught that the parts of speech are only five; as did the latter stoics, whose classes, according to Harris, were these: articles, nouns appellative, nouns proper, verbs, and conjunctions. Others have made them four; as did Aristotle and the elder stoics; and, more recently, Brightland, Harris, and Fisher. Many of the ancients, Greeks, Hebrews, and Arabians, according to Quintilian, made them three. Plato, according to Harris, and the first inquirers into language, according to Horne Tooke, made



them two; nouns and verbs: which, Dalton says, "are the only parts essentially necessary for the communication of our thoughts." Those who know nothing about grammar, regard all words as of one class; and the ingenious reasoning of Cardell, being conducted without any fixed principles, arrives ultimately at the same conclusion. This writer, in his *Essay on Language*, reckons seven parts of speech; in his *New York grammar*, six; in his *Hartford grammar*, three, with three others subordinate; in his *Philadelphia grammar*, three only—nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Here he alleges, "The unerring plan of nature has established three classes of perceptions, and consequently three parts of speech."—*Phil. Gram.* p. 171.—While, in the same book, he affirms, that, "All other terms are but derivative forms and new applications of nouns."—p. 21.—But Neef, in his zeal for simplification, carries the anticlimax fairly off the brink; and declares, "In the grammar which will be the work of my pupils, there shall be found no nouns, no pronouns, no articles, no participles, no verbs, no prepositions, no conjunctions, no adverbs, no interjections, no gerunds, not even one single supine. Unmercifully shall they be banished from it."—*Method of Education*, p. 60.

But those writers on grammar, who do not even pretend to follow or respect the authority and custom of the learned, are, it would seem, not so properly to be reckoned grammarians, as antigrammarians. They are the zealots and overturners of literature, more apt to object than to teach, more ingenious to pull down than to build up; whose works are unworthy of serious refutation, and can serve no other useful purpose, than to make men of sense more firm in defence of practical instruction. The names of these I shall not, in this connexion, enumerate; nor needs there any apology for the omission, after what has been said of their character.

Among the earliest of the English grammarians, was Ben Johnson, the poet; who died in the year 1637, at the age of sixty-three. His grammar is still extant, being published in the several editions of his works. It is a meagre treatise, and

worthy of attention only as a matter of curiosity. Grammar is an unpoetical subject, and therefore not wisely treated, (as it once very generally was,) in verse. But every poet should be familiar with the art, because the formal principles of his own have always been considered as embraced in it. To its poets every language must needs be particularly indebted; because their composition, being in general more highly finished than prose, is supposed to present the language in its most agreeable form. In the preface to the poems of Edmund Waller published in 1690, the editor ventures to say, "He was, indeed, the parent of English verse, and the first that showed us our tongue had beauty and numbers in it. Our language owes more to him than the French does to Cardinal Richelieu and the whole academy. The tongue came into his hands a rough diamond: he polished it first; and to that degree, that all artists since him have admired the workmanship, without pretending to mend it."

William Walker, the preceptor of Sir Isaac Newton, a teacher and grammarian of extraordinary learning, who died in 1684, has left us a monument of his taste and critical skill, in his *Treatise of English Particles*—a work of great labor and merit, but useless to most people now-a-days, because it explains the English in Latin.

In 1706, Richard Johnson published an octavo volume of more than four hundred pages, entitled, "Grammatical Commentaries; being an Apparatus to a New National Grammar: by way of animadversion upon the falsities, obscurities, redundancies, and defects of Lily's System now in use." This is a work of great acuteness, labor, and learning; and might be of signal use to any one who should undertake to prepare a new or improved Latin grammar: of which, in my opinion, we have yet urgent need. The English grammarian may also peruse it with advantage, if he has a good knowledge of Latin—and, without such knowledge, he must be ill prepared for his task. This work is spoken of and quoted by some of the early English grammarians; but the hopes of the writer

do not appear to have been realized. His book was not well calculated to supply the place of the common one; for the author thought it impracticable to make a new grammar suitable for boys, and embrace in it proofs sufficient to remove the prejudices of teachers in favor of the old. King Henry's edict in support of Lily, was yet in force, backed by the partiality which habit creates; and Johnson's learning, and labor, and zeal, were admired, and praised, and soon forgot.

The grammar of the English Tongue, published by John Brightland, and recommended by Steele, or the Tatler, under the fictitious name of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq. of which I have the seventh edition, dated 1746, is a duodecimo volume of three hundred pages, a work of no inconsiderable merit and originality, and written in a style which has scarcely been surpassed by any English grammarian since. It, however, unwisely makes the parts of speech four, gives them new names, and rejects more of the old system than the schools seem to have been willing to give up. Hence it does not appear to have been very extensively adopted.

Whoever is curious to examine at large what has been published on this subject, and to qualify himself to judge accurately of the originality and comparative merits of the different grammars which are or have been used in English schools, may easily make a collection of one or two hundred, bearing different names. The treatises of the learned doctors, Harris, Lowth, Ash, Johnson, Priestley, Horne Tooke, Crombie, Coote, and Webster, owe their celebrity not so much to their intrinsic fitness for school instruction, as to the literary reputation of the writers. Harris's *Hermes* is not an English grammar, but a philosophical inquiry concerning universal grammar. To this work Lowth referred those students who might desire to pursue the subject beyond the limits of his little treatise, or "*Short Introduction*;" which, he says, "was calculated for the learner *even of the lowest class*." But these two authors, if taken together, supply no sufficient course of English grammar: the instructions of the one are too limited, and those of the other

are not specially directed to the subject. Ash's work is still more meagre than Lowth's; Johnson's is all comprised in fourteen pages, and allows to the syntax but ten short lines; Priestley contented himself with adding a brief appendix of critical notes, to a petty code of the most common elements, alleging that the language was "by no means ripe for a complete grammar." In point of time, both Ash and Priestley expressly claim priority to Lowth, for their first editions; but the former having allowed his work to be afterwards entitled an Introduction to Lowth's Introduction, and the latter having acknowledged his obligations to Lowth for some improvements in his third edition, grammarians have uniformly spoken of them as later writers. Horne Tooke, and his convert Dr. Webster, deviated so widely from the common track, that few have been disposed to follow them; but, in his recent publications, the latter seems to have come nearly back to the old system. The works of Crombie and Coote are more properly essays or dissertations, than elementary systems of grammar.

Dr. Beattie, who acquired great celebrity as a teacher, poet, philosopher, and logician, was well skilled in grammar; but he treated the subject only in critical disquisitions, and not in any distinct elementary work adapted to general use. Sheridan and Walker, being lexicographers, confined themselves chiefly to orthography and pronunciation. The learned doctors Blair and Campbell wrote on rhetoric, and not on the elementary parts of grammar. Of these, the latter is by far the more accurate writer. His philosophy of rhetoric is a very valuable treatise.

Some of the most respectable authors or compilers of more general systems for the use of schools, are, the writer of the British Grammar, Bicknell, Buchanan, Mennye, Murray, Fisher, Fenning, Grant, Allen, David Blair, Guy, and Churchill. To attempt any thing like a review or comparison of these, would protract this discourse beyond all reasonable bounds. Of mere abridgers and modifiers the number is so great, and the merit so little, that I will not trespass upon

your patience by any further mention of them or their works. Every intelligent man can surely discern the difference between originality of style, and innovation in doctrine—between a due regard to the opinions of others, and an actual usurpation of their text; and must be sensible, that, to improve the best of grammars, requires a degree of knowledge and skill which would enable a man to write in language of his own—to improve an inferior one would be a needless and foolish undertaking.

Whoever takes an accurate and comprehensive view of the history and present state of this branch of learning, though he may not conclude, with Dr. Priestley, that it is premature to attempt a complete grammar of the language, can scarcely forbear to coincide with Dr. Barrow, in the opinion that among all the treatises which have heretofore been popular no such grammar is found. In his Essays published in 1804, speaking of this subject, he says: "Some superfluities have been expunged, some mistakes have been rectified, and some obscurities have been cleared. Still, however, that all the grammars used in our different schools, public as well as private, are disgraced by errors or defects, is a complaint as just as it is frequent and loud."

What further improvement has recently been made, I leave to the unbiassed judgment of others. The public are interested in estimating it justly. The opinions expressed on this occasion, have been formed with candor, and offered with submission. If in any thing they are erroneous, there are those present who can detect their faults. In the language of an ancient master, I invite the correction of the candid. "*Nos quoque, quantumcunque diligentes, cum a candidis. tum a lividis carpemur: a candidis interdum justè; quos oro, ut de erratis omnibus amicè me admoneant—erro nonnunquam quia homo sum.*"—*Despauter.*

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# LECTURE VII.

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INFLUENCE OF

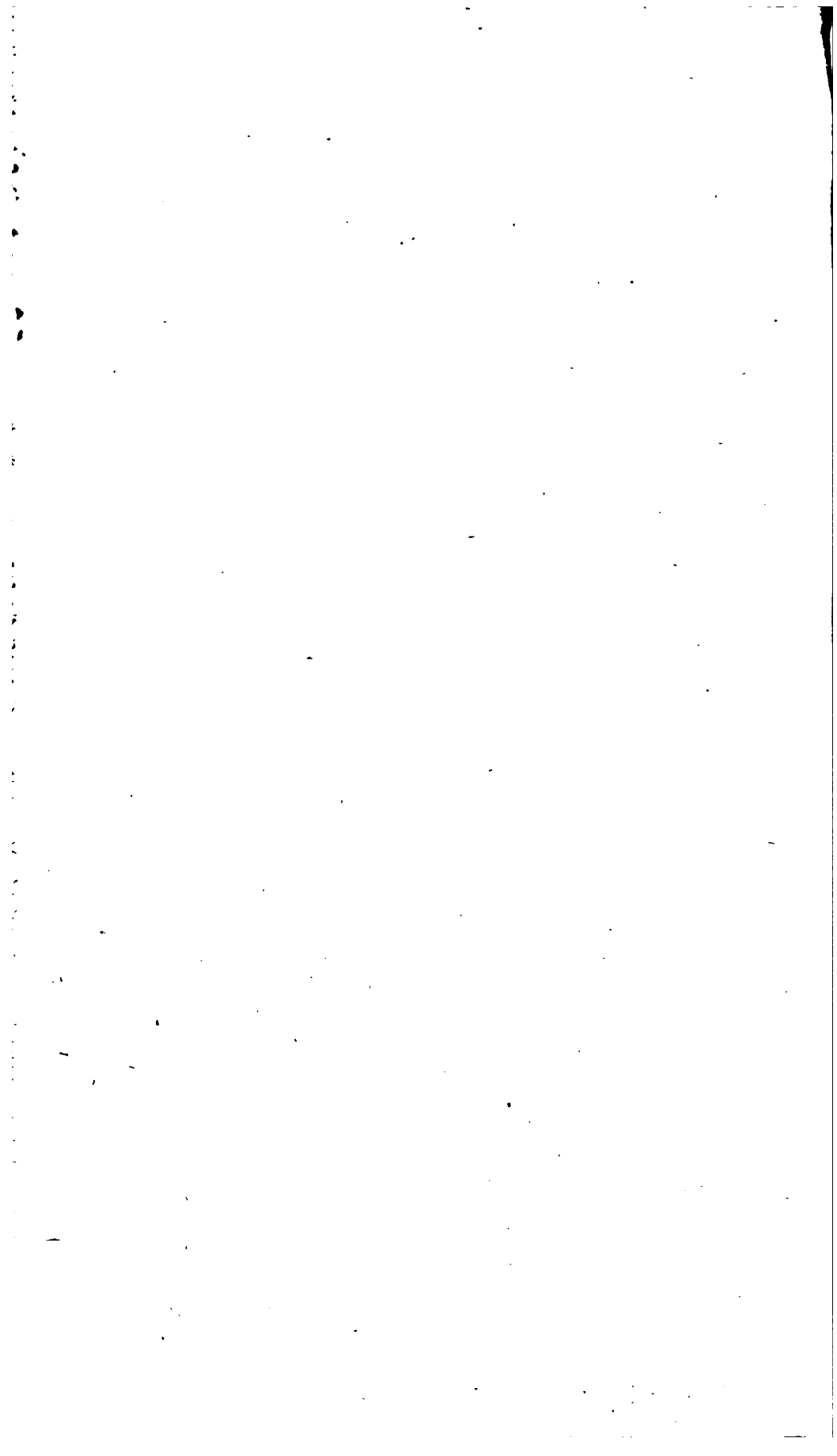
ACADEMIES AND HIGH SCHOOLS

ON

COMMON SCHOOLS.

BY WM. C. FOWLER.

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## INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIES AND HIGH SCHOOLS

ON

### COMMON SCHOOLS.

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WHILE it shall remain true, that the great body of the community must depend on common schools for their stock of learning; it must likewise be true, that all the influences which are in operation, either to injure or promote the excellence of these numerous institutions, ought to be thoroughly examined by the friends of education. I shall therefore make no apology for introducing to your attention some remarks on *the influence of academies and high schools on the common schools of our country.*

In giving this form to the statement of the subject, assigned to me for examination, your committee probably intended to leave me at liberty to speak either on the influence that is actually exerted, or on the influence that ought to be exerted, by academies and high schools on common schools. That this influence is now great and salutary, and that it might be made more powerful and propitious, no one can doubt who has examined the relations of these classes of institutions.

It shall be my object to speak of what ought to be, though I may occasionally notice what is, their influence. In order to do this, it is necessary to call your attention to the standing they occupy, which is that of a middle grade between common schools on the one hand and colleges on the other. Besides



the general influence which every literary institution exerts upon every other, in elevating or depressing the standard of education in the community, they have a direct influence upon the latter, inasmuch as they furnish them with a large part of their students; and upon the former, since they supply them with a considerable number of teachers. It is through them that the pure and healthful principles of science and literature, that spring from those higher institutions, flow down to common schools, to water and refresh the lowest strata of our population. And it is likewise through them, for the most part, that the young aspiring spirits of our land, as they leave those lower institutions, must pass in their ascent to the colleges, the fountain of learning.

What then are some of the means, by which academies and high schools may be improved in their condition, and be made to exert a greater and more salutary influence than they now do?

The first means to be noticed is *the employment of permanent teachers*. This is now done to some extent, and with the most beneficial results; so that from actual experiment we can gather an argument in favor of adopting it as a general measure. There are men who have, for many years, been employed as teachers in institutions of this kind, with great reputation to themselves, and great advantage to the community, and the cause of learning.

But how is the business managed now for the most part? Why, in such a way that the office of instruction in an academy or high school, is only a resting place between collegiate and professional pursuits, in which the individual may collect resources for preparing himself for his future occupation. The trustees of some such institution, being in want of a teacher, make application at some college, and secure one, for six months or a year, who is recommended, of course, as high as his qualifications will bear. When arrived at the place of his destination, he finds himself among strangers, the subject of inquiry and remark, and of comparison, it may be, with his

predecessor. While he is thus the object of curiosity and investigation, both in school among his pupils, and abroad among their parents in the village, he, on the other hand, is obliged to study the peculiarity of his situation, the disposition and habits and prejudices of the community around him, and the individual and general character of his pupils; for unless he is well acquainted with these particulars, both in school and out of it, he cannot hope for much success either in instruction or discipline. He feels that he is an unprotected stranger, among, it may be, a worthy people, but who will be quick to perceive his mistakes.

Now, in such a situation, it is hardly possible that he should feel a deep interest either in the proficiency of his scholars, of whom he knows but little and whom he is soon to leave, or in the employment, which he regards only as a temporary occupation, to which he felt compelled by the necessity of his circumstances; and the time spent in it, he regards as wasted, so far as his preparation for a profession for life is concerned. Many, indeed most of the professions, whether mechanical or liberal, present to the novice much that is unattractive and even repulsive at first, but which, upon acquaintance with the practice and principles of those professions, become pleasing. Many a student at law, who found the study of that profession so dull and irksome that he was often at the point of abandoning it, found, as he advanced, new sources of interest constantly opening, until he became exceedingly attached to it, and distinguished for his skill in jurisprudence. But the difficulty with the teacher in the circumstances mentioned, is that he does not stay long enough in the employment to become acquainted with its various sources of interest, while he does stay long enough to become acquainted with whatever about it is dull, irksome and vexatious.

And more than this, if his mind is active and enterprising, his thoughts will be intent upon the studies of his future profession; and he would view it as a bad symptom in himself, and bespeaking a sluggish and coward heart, to form an at-

tachment to a business which could afford him neither the emolument, nor the respectability, nor the influence, of the other learned professions. He is looking forward to his release from teaching, as from a drudgery, when he may practise the healing art, or raise his voice in the court of justice, or in the temples of God. While he is in that state of mind, it is not possible that he should be very deeply interested in the occupation of teaching; and it is hardly possible that a man can be very successful in an employment in which he does not feel an interest.

Besides this want of interest, he does not spend time enough in the profession to become acquainted either with the science or the art of instruction. It is one thing to become acquainted with subjects in the abstract, and quite another thing to know them in their relations to the minds of others; and it is from confounding these two things, that the best scholars are supposed to be the best teachers.

What is education? In the largest sense of the word, it denotes all those influences, whether designed or casual, which are concerned in the formation of character. It may be considered as embracing all those moral causes that operate on the intellectual, the moral, and the corporeal faculties. In a more limited sense, it comprises all those direct means which are intended, by their influence, to rescue the young from the power of accident, and prepare them to be happy, useful and virtuous in the successive periods of their existence.

Now it is the duty of a teacher in an academy or high school, as of every other, that he should be acquainted with these means, and be able to select such as are appropriate, and apply them in the most efficacious manner. But this acquaintance with these means, and this selection and application, implies that he should not only know the objects which he is to present to the mind of the pupil, but also the powers of that pupil's mind and the various modes of approaching it. In other words, he should be thoroughly versed in the sciences and arts which he professes to teach. Next to this, he should

be well acquainted with the powers and habitudes of the human mind, to which these sciences and arts are to be communicated. And finally, he should be familiar with the best modes of fixing the principles and illustrations of those arts and sciences in the mind of the learner. He should be able to analyze that mind, discover its defects, cultivate all its powers in due proportion, and thus promote the perfection of the whole. If he finds him deficient in power of attention, he should be able to apply those appropriate studies, and that kind of discipline which will awaken and strengthen that faculty. If he finds him deficient in vigor and activity of imagination, he should know how to apply the appropriate remedy, by presenting to him the objects that are sublime and beautiful, whether found in nature, or in the walks of genius. If he finds him unable to follow a train of reasoning, he should know how to apply some of those exact sciences to remove this mental defect, which have been proved to be of such sovereign virtue in purifying the mental vision. Or if he finds him deficient in the power of observation, or in taste, or in moral feeling, or in the social affections, he should be acquainted with that training which will remove these defects.

Calling to mind, then, that education, as a science, consists in the classification of those principles, that are adapted to produce the highest degree of intellectual, moral and corporeal excellence, of which the individual is susceptible, and that, as an art, it consists in the proper application of these principles, and that the preceptor of an academy or high school has occasion to know and apply a large part of these principles; calling to mind, too, that a temporary teacher has neither motive nor time to become acquainted with education, either as a science or an art, we are prepared to perceive the utter incompetency of that class of instructors, who take up teaching as a temporary employment, without recurring to their frequent want of success.

Besides, even though he were properly versed in the business of instruction, he does not continue long enough to finish what

he begins. Human mind is the material upon which he is to operate ; and it is a long process, to be conducted with great care, to form that mind into a state of the greatest excellence of which it is susceptible. Taking the school only for a short period, while he is looking forward to the time when he shall complete as a hireling his day, he feels that it is utterly vain for him to enter upon an enlarged plan of education, which it would require some years to execute. He knows, too, that if he commences such a plan, his successor who is soon to follow him, may pursue a course entirely different, so that instead of endeavoring to form the minds of his pupils upon a high standard, he directs their attention chiefly to that degree of proficiency, which they can make while under his care, and which will enable them to pass a good examination at the close of his school. In this manner is he tempted to withdraw his attention from laying a broad and strong foundation of future excellence in their minds, and to fix it mainly upon those acquisitions that will immediately show to advantage.

Nor does he stay long enough to gain a personal influence in the community ; whereas the permanent teacher would gain the confidence of men around him, who, if he did his duty, would, by a course of observation, be convinced of his desire to promote the improvement of his pupils, and of his judiciousness in the selection of means for that purpose, and who would be ready to support him in his measures. Thus would he carry with him a moral strength, which his school would not be disposed to oppose. And if a scholar should be refractory, either in regard to his own studies or the general discipline of the school, he would find himself overborne by the voice of the community, who would rise up to support the teacher whom they had long found competent and faithful.

What would be the consequence, if the professions of law, physic and theology, were filled for the most part by those who should spend only the same length of time, which is now generally spent by those who are employed in the business of teaching in academies and high schools ? Would they not utterly

fail of accomplishing the end for which they were established? Let, for instance, the student at law know that he will continue but one, two, or three years in that profession, and think you, would he be very anxious to become acquainted with its principles, its forms, and its pleadings? Would he give days and nights to the study of precedents and statutes, and to a personal preparation to appear in courts of justice as the successful advocate of the injured? No; it is the feeling that his support, his reputation, his success in life, depend on his diligence, in his preparatory studies, and during the first years of his professional employment, that rouse him up to apply the whole force of his mind to qualify himself for his business. Let the same feeling prevail among those who are engaged in the business of instruction, and the effect would be to raise up a body of able, learned, and zealous teachers to take the charge of the academies and high schools of our country, who would stand upon a full equality with the members of other professions, in influence, learning, and gentlemanly accomplishments. If such a body of men existed, the intercourse they would naturally have with each other, and the organizations they would form for mutual improvement, would tend to keep alive their interests in their occupation, increase their professional qualifications, and thus produce the same beneficial effects upon them, which ministers derive from their associations and conventions; physicians from their medical faculties; and lawyers from their intercourse with each other at the bar.

And they should consist not merely of men who, from some defect, bodily or mental, cannot enter the other professions successfully; not merely of the sickly or the nervous who have not sufficient strength of body to make the requisite exertion, nor sufficient uniformity of feeling to preserve consistency of character; not merely of the cold and reserved, for such cannot awaken personal interests, nor of the eccentric in manners or in mind, for such will excite secret if not open ridicule and contempt. And I apprehend that many have taken a disgust with learning from not seeing such an illustration of it in their

teachers, as would either wake their admiration or command their respect ; just as there are those, who get a dislike to the christian religion, by getting their impression of it from witnessing the conduct and character of some of its professors. When the pupils see before them, every day, in their instructor some striking defects either in mental habits or personal manners, they are very apt to set them as the legitimate effects of learning ; and as they would deprecate these defects in their own character, they become disgusted with the learning from which they are supposed to proceed. A full proportion of healthy men, who can make the necessary effort, of men of well balanced minds, who will pursue a consistent course of ready social feelings, who attract to themselves a strong personal interest in the minds of their pupils ; of good manners for them to copy into their own department,—should enter the profession. And there is motive enough for them to do so. For if a person of this character, as the instructor of an academy, shall feel the importance of the trust committed to him ; if he shall have a quick moral sensibility to his duty and a deep sense of his responsibility, called as he is to train up immortal beings to enjoy and communicate happiness in this world and the next ; if, standing in the place of a parent towards his pupil, he bears himself as a parent ; they in their turn, will, as they are scattered through the community in its various departments, return to him in respect and affection the debt of gratitude they owe him. He labored hard to form them into men, and in subsequent years he shall have his reward in seeing that he did not labor in vain. Whenever they meet him they will, in remembrance of the benefits received at his hands, rise up and call him blessed ; as Alexander felt towards Aristotle his tutor, no less affection than for his father, saying that from the one he received the blessing of life, and from the other the blessings of a good life.

Let men of this cast of character, thus strong in the confidence of the public of which they have been the benefactors ; thus comprehensive in their views of the subject of education ;

thus devoted permanently to their business ; be at the head of the several academies and high schools of our country, and the standard of education would be raised, general intelligence would pervade all classes of the people ; and from these institutions as so many radiating points, would then go forth an auspicious influence upon common schools, not only in this increase of intelligence in the community, but in furnishing able and accomplished teachers.

Another means, by which academies and high schools may be made to exert a greater and more salutary influence upon common schools, is a *longer attendance on the part of the pupils in these higher institutions*. This would give them a more thorough education, enable them to perceive the importance of improving the condition of common schools, and, whether as teachers or patrons, to devise plans for accomplishing that improvement.

Let the most accomplished scholars be employed as instructors, and those that are best qualified to gain the confidence of their pupils, and make them in love with learning, still, unless there is sufficient time to operate on their minds by a course of instruction and discipline, they will, to a large extent, labor in vain.

What is the present history of this subject ? Why, of those that attend these institutions, a part residing in the immediate vicinity, so that they can conveniently walk to them every day without changing their residence, attend them a longer period, though a considerable number of these ultimately resort to the college to complete their education. Another part, from a greater distance, attend them a year, or two years, pursuing the study of the Greek and Latin languages as preparatory to entering some college ; at which they are found to be poorly qualified for their standing, in consequence of having hurried over their studies so rapidly. Another and by far the largest part, taking the whole country through, are those who repair to the academy or high school, for one or two quarters,



and sometimes longer, to complete their education. It is of this latter class that I would speak more particularly.

It comprises those who have become acquainted with the common branches of school education ; and who go to those higher institutions to add a knowledge of some of the higher branches, to polish off their learning, and prepare themselves to be teachers, or for some of the professions of active life. Having much to learn, and but little time, besides reviewing English grammar, arithmetic and geography, they wish to study natural philosophy, rhetoric, composition, logic, astronomy, perhaps surveying, and by all means chemistry, and it may be several other branches, and all this in the space of three or six months, notwithstanding there should be an exhibition in the mean time to employ the time and attention of the school. I do not mean that all these studies are often actually pursued during that short period, but that many make as near an approximation to it as they can ; and the consequence is, that by running over so many studies in so short a time, they acquire the habit of studying in a superficial manner, so that what they gain in knowledge, they lose in mental discipline. They bring home with them a smattering of learning on these subjects, and from this inadequate and imperfect acquaintance, they teach others to think lightly of them. An acquaintance with a subject does not deserve the name of knowledge, unless that subject is understood in its bearing and relations, and unless the truths concerning it are thoroughly digested, and made to assimilate to the mind so as to make a part of its structure. Evidently this cannot be done in the short period that I have mentioned. For instance, let a lad of fourteen take up Jamieson's Rhetoric, and study it during a quarter so attentively as to be able to answer every question at a public examination, still he may know very little of the principles of fine writing, either in their application to his own composition, or in criticism on that of others. A large part of those, who have finished their education by this short course, are precisely in this situation. They know a mass of things, but nothing

distinctly, or adequately. They are acquainted with a few of the definitions, and a few of the leading facts, as mere matters of memory, but they have not risen to a perception of the beauties or uses of the subjects they have studied. And yet these are the persons better qualified than most others to teach in common schools, since most others have never had the advantage of attending in any higher institution a single day. I do not suppose that this description is universally correct in its application ; indeed there must be many exceptions. But some acquaintance with the condition of education in three of the New England States, warrants the belief that it is extensively a fair description. Indeed I am acquainted with some academies and high schools, to which individuals resort every autumn, just before the winter schools commence, that they may qualify themselves to be teachers, by an attendance of not more than three or four weeks, though they have never attended any similar institution before.

Now the importance of a longer attendance at the academy or high school may be seen from the following considerations.

Every scholar brings with him some bad intellectual habits, which require to be corrected. Considerable time must pass away, before the teacher, even though he is deeply versed in the science of mind, can understand what are the mental defects of his pupil. A longer time still must pass away, before he can make him, who is the subject of them, perceive what they are. A much longer time still must be spent, before the proper remedies can be applied, even though both use their most strenuous exertions for the purpose. On the supposition that permanent teachers are employed, it might be expected that they would be thoroughly versed in the philosophy of the human mind, especially as it develops the intellectual progress of the young ; and that they would be likewise familiarly acquainted with the means best adapted to promote this progress.

Besides this, the conscientious teacher feels himself bound to

bestow attention on the moral culture of his pupils ; and to this end he finds it necessary to study the moral powers of each individual, his associations, prejudices and affections, that he may know how to gain access to his heart, and place it under the influence of motives that will form it to virtue. Now in order to accomplish this, he must become intimate with him, and gain his confidence, and confidence we are told is a plant of slow growth. By a course of kindness, and by an affectionate deportment, he must convince him that he is sincerely desirous of promoting his happiness as an accountable and immortal being. To accomplish this, in any good degree, time is necessary. It is not the work of one month, or three months.

Besides this, the knowledge gained ought to be not a mere acquaintance with generalities, but with the particulars upon which the general truths are founded ; otherwise he will not be able himself to become deeply interested in the several subjects, whatever they are, because he will not perceive the beautiful relations of their principles ; nor will he, if called to teach them, be able to communicate adequate views concerning them to others, or awaken an interest in their minds. There is all the difference in the world between the knowledge of arithmetic which he has, who is only able mechanically to follow the rules laid down in some treatise, and in like manner to prove his work ; and the knowledge another has, who understands the relations of numbers, and who can demonstrate by algebra and geometry the rules themselves. There is a great difference between the knowledge of the first Eclogue of Virgil which he has, who barely understands the construction, and is able to parse every word correctly according to Adam's grammar ; and that which another has, who rises above the mere literal meaning to a perception of the touching beauties of sentiment and description in that exquisite poem. Many a one has studied the whole of Virgil so attentively, as to be able readily to construe any passage in it, who nevertheless entered so little into the spirit of the author, as to perceive scarcely a ray of beauty gleaming from its pages.

Now the difficulty with those, who complete their education at the academy or high school, is, that they do not stay there long enough to become acquainted with the particulars of the several subjects sufficiently to enter into the spirit of those subjects; and therefore cannot succeed, when called to teach others in a common school, in imparting to their minds, a very deep interest in those subjects. *Quod non habet dare non potest.*

The fact I am dwelling on corresponds with the customs of our country, whether it arises from the circumstance that time is more valuable here than elsewhere, or that we are more easily satisfied than some others, to spend but comparatively a short period in preparing for the several professions. We are inclined to take the shortest course to every thing; and in our arrangements in the several departments of life, we have almost as many labor-saving machines for the mind as for the body. In many of the mechanic arts, men are found, who, after a few months' practice, establish themselves in business successfully, as master workmen, competent to teach apprentices the rules and practice of their trade. And as the public suffers in using articles poorly manufactured by them, so it does likewise from the incompetency of teachers of common schools, who have spent so little time in their preparation for the business of instruction. In this occupation neither inspiration nor intuition can impart the requisite gratifications. Time is necessary to form the workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

The short stay of those of whom we have been speaking, at those higher seminaries, is an evil of great extent, and universally complained of by those who have had personal experience in their instruction. And the effect of it is very discouraging on the mind of the preceptor. He would wish to take them through a thorough course of study, and after keeping them a sufficient length of time, to send them forth into society, not as smatterers, but as well versed in every subject to which they have attended. He would wish to act upon a plan in forming the mind of every individual, and to have time to

finish what he begins. With what satisfaction would a sculptor commence working upon a block of marble, who knew that it would be taken from his hands before he had formed it into an image which should embody his high conceptions of manly dignity or female grace? When Phidias began the statue of Minerva for the Athenians, or that of Jupiter Olympus for the inhabitants of Elis, could he, with the knowledge that he should not be allowed sufficient time to complete them, have labored either with satisfaction or success? Could he, by the hurried labor of six months, have made the goddess of wisdom worthy of the "eye of Greece," or the king of gods and men, one of the seven wonders of the world? Neither can he, who is employed in the noble task of shaping the mind into a form of excellence, be expected to labor with satisfaction or success, if he is obliged to do what he does in a hurry, and to send his work from his hand, half done. If seven years, from fourteen to twenty one, are necessary to qualify one for the skillful practice of several of the mechanic arts, and for instructing others in those arts; surely a longer time, and a much longer time than is actually spent after the mind has come to maturity, should be occupied in preparation for the responsible and delicate task of shaping the minds of the young and imparting to them the rudiments of learning.

Another means by which academies and high schools may be made to exert a greater and more salutary influence upon common schools, *is to increase their number.*

"On this point I have found it difficult to obtain all the information which, perhaps, would be requisite to carry conviction to the minds of others. In the case of colleges, as they are fewer in number, and more elevated in rank, and objects of a more general interest among the influential part of the community, it is easy to obtain every important fact in relation to their resources, the number of their students, the course of instruction and discipline pursued, and their actual influence on the community; more especially since so much discussion has taken place concerning them, sustained on the one side by those

who profess to be governed by the lights of experience, and on the other by those who would have us believe they have discovered some brighter lights. So that what with their annual catalogues, or circulars, or reports, or expositions, or other means they adopt for attracting the notice of the public ; their condition, standing, and adaptedness to the wants of the community, are generally known. And in the case of common schools too, from the circumstance that the great body of the people, while each individual is in early life, attend them ; and from the circumstance that in mature years a large part are present, in the school district to which they belong, at deliberations concerning the choice of a teacher, the salary that should be paid, and the time he should be employed ; and from the reports that are annually made in the legislatures of the several States ; it has happened that their number and condition can easily be ascertained by those who are in search of information.

But in the case of academies and high schools, the same causes not operating to create a general interest in their condition, or to diffuse information concerning their number officially, it is comparatively difficult to obtain many statistical facts. In some of the States there is one or more incorporated academy in every county, kept through the year. Besides these, in some of the larger towns there is a high school kept a part of the year ; and in some of the largest, several are constantly supported.

But these are not sufficient to supply the wants of the community at large ; though it may be true that some few places are abundantly furnished with them. To say nothing of other sections of our country, where the deficiency is more striking, in New England there are a great many flourishing towns, containing two or three thousand inhabitants, in which they do not support either of these institutions ; though they are well able to furnish a sufficient number of scholars, and pay for their tuition. Now the consequence is, that from not having one of these higher seminaries near them, only a very

small part of the youth acquire any thing more than a common school education. By establishing a high school in each one of these towns, were it for only six months in the year, besides the general improvement of the community, which of course would contribute to the improvement of common schools, it would remove from these institutions, the older youth who take up the attention of the teacher, and thus would enable him to apply his undivided exertions to the younger scholars. It not unfrequently happens, that in some of these towns there are schools during the winter season, containing from fifty to seventy scholars from four years old to twenty, all dependent on one man for instruction. The consequence is, that having so much to do, he can do nothing well. He neglects the younger scholars for the sake of the older, and to the older he can render very little assistance. In such a case, let there be a division of labor. Let one of those higher seminaries be established, to which let the elder scholars be transferred for the two-fold purpose of affording to themselves and the younger scholars an opportunity of receiving better instruction. Thus should we have three classes of benefits bestowed by the academy or high school, on common schools; the first in raising the standard of education in the community, and teaching the influential men in the several school districts to appreciate the importance of having competent instructors; the second in furnishing those of this character; and the third in relieving them of embarrassing numbers, or at least of those who take off the attention of the instructor from the younger scholars. Now in reply but one argument can be urged, and that is on the score of economy. It must be conceded then, that by increasing the number of these higher institutions, we must necessarily increase the expenses of education, especially to those who rely on a fund for support of common schools. The preceptor must be paid a higher salary; a more commodious building is necessary, for the erection of which there must be a liberal contribution; and to those who have several children to send, the expense of tuition is considerable. These considerations

will probably for a long time prevent the establishment of these higher seminaries in many places. They touch the pocket nerve, which unfortunately is but too sensitive, when the subject of increasing the expenses of education is proposed. It is difficult to make some men perceive that the subscription of one hundred dollars, for building an academy, and the additional expense of twenty dollars a year, for the tuition of their children, are profitable investments. The inconvenience is felt immediately, while the advantage is to be sought in some distant period, and is so diffused that it is difficult to collect it, so that the whole amount shall be seen. But could they become acquainted with the history of a town, like one that I could name, in which, about fifty years ago, an excellent teacher established a school of a higher order than a common school, which he kept with great success for about thirty years, could they carefully count over the number of distinguished men who received their education at that school, preparatory to entering college, and view the good which they have produced as statesmen, divines, or as private citizens; could they see how, during that space of time, an influence went forth from that school into every district in that town, that was visible in the general intelligence of the inhabitants, in the deep interest they manifested in the subject of education, and in furnishing them with competent teachers for their common schools;—they would be convinced of the importance of patronising institutions of this kind, even though this conviction should cost them some pecuniary inconvenience.

In a general system of education for our country, in which by a division of labor the most could be accomplished, academies and high schools might occupy the following places:

1. Let a college be established in every state in the Union; more than one, provided always that they should be well endowed.
2. Let academies be established in every shire town, and in some others, provided, as before, that they should be furnished with funds necessary to erect a suitable building, purchase apparatus, and with the tuition to support perma-



nent and well qualified teachers. Let every town, in those sections where the territory is divided into townships, containing two or three thousand inhabitants, provided they are not too much scattered, support a high school the whole or a part of the year, taught by temporary teachers if others could not be obtained; and these should be either graduates of the colleges, or those who have been thoroughly educated at the academies. 4. Then, in order, come common schools, supported in part by the state, and in part by the district, and taught by those who have been through a thorough course of instruction at the academy or high school. 5. And last follows the infant school, located in a population sufficiently dense, and supported by the enterprise and good judgment of intelligent females.

Another means by which academies and high schools may be made to exert a greater and more salutary influence upon common schools, *is the establishment in them of a department for qualifying teachers.*

It has indeed been said that the art of teaching is incommunicable in its nature, that it consists rather in a sort of tact with which some are gifted than any set of rules that can be taught to others. Now, in reply, all that need be said, is, that every teacher finds that he can, by consulting any intelligent man who has had experience in the business of teaching, derive rules from him, which he can with advantage follow both in discipline and instruction; and this implies that it is not an incommunicable art. The truth is, that neither instinct nor inspiration can be expected to qualify a man for the business of teaching, independently of study and experience. There is, indeed, considerable diversity in the modes which different teachers have adopted, who have been distinguished for their success. In the government of a school, some are successful by always employing the winning voice of kindness: as others are by appealing to the persuasion of the rod, in the very spirit of Dr. Bushby, when he roared out, as he was wont, "tuck him up, boys." In the use of motives some have successfully employed

the principle of emulation ; and others have relied on the more permanent, and, to some minds, the more powerful motive, found in the subjects themselves, when their beauties and attractions are unfolded. Some successful teachers use the analytic, and some the synthetic, mode of instruction. Now the principles that are concerned in the government of a school, in the motives addressed to them, and in the mode of introducing knowledge into the mind, constitute the science of teaching, when they are properly classified and stated. Rules legitimately founded on these principles, when they are practically applied, constitute the art of teaching. And there is the same reason why the science and the art of teaching should both be known, that there is why the principles and practice of any profession should be understood by him who engages in it.

Now, for imparting the requisite knowledge, two propositions have been made. The one is to establish seminaries for the sole purpose of making teachers of common schools competent to perform successfully the duties of their office, by instructing them in the science and art of their business. This undoubtedly would be the most thorough course, so far as it should be adopted ; and I can see no objection to it, excepting the single one, that while the teachers of common schools shall receive a less salary than industrious mechanics, they can hardly be expected to put themselves to the additional expense of attending an institution of this kind. A large proportion of the teachers of common schools in our country, are farmers who employ themselves during the winter in teaching, because at that season they have little or nothing that they can do besides. With the same qualifications they can afford to teach school at a cheaper rate than those who depend on this business as their only means of subsistence ; and thus it happens that the many who are temporary teachers, and the few who are permanent, have not a sufficient motive to repair, in any considerable numbers, to schools of this kind. Those who should attend would undoubtedly become better acquainted than others with the science and art of instruction, and it is therefore exceedingly desirable

to have as many of these schools established as can be supported ; and as many supported as would furnish a teacher for every common school in the United States.

But however desirable this may be, it must for the present be considered as hopeless ; and the better, because the more feasible plan, would be to have a class a part or the whole of the year, in every academy, who should pursue a specified course of study to qualify themselves for the profession of teaching. In this mode there would be less expense of travel and time, and the attention of the community would be turned to the preparation of teachers for their employment as a subject of great importance. The other scholars in the academy would become more or less acquainted with the system, so that they could judge of the qualifications of teachers, and if need be, could with comparative ease qualify themselves at some future time for the business of teaching.

And here I would say that there should be a distinct and definite course of study marked out by the trustees of every incorporated academy ; and an acquaintance with a certain part of this course should be considered as a necessary prerequisite for admittance to the class that are qualifying themselves to be teachers. After they had entered this class, besides making them familiarly acquainted with all the branches taught in common schools, the preceptor should give them familiar lectures on the business of instruction and discipline ; should afford to each one an opportunity of actually giving instruction to the class to which he belongs, or to a younger one. He should turn their attention to all the principal modes of teaching, and to the influence of the different motives employed, and urge them to read valuable treatises on the subject of education, introduce to their notice all the improvement in manuals and furnish philosophical criticisms on those in use. This would prevent, in some degree, the inconsiderate changes that are sometimes made in manuals, and, at the same time, would take the selection of books out of the hands of booksellers and publishers, who have a pecuniary interest in the sale of cer-

tain books and the exclusion of others, and place it in the hands of the intelligent and disinterested part of the community. It is owing to the want of some such course as this, that certain evils prevail to some extent in the books used in common schools, as for instance the awkward and obsolete spelling of Johnson. The preceptor, moreover, by dwelling on the importance and dignity of the profession, which aims to form the minds of the young for high intellectual enjoyment in the performance of the various duties they owe to their friends, their country, and their God, could hardly fail to waken up an enthusiasm on this subject that would lead many of the finest minds, while they were engaged in improving themselves, to consecrate their talents to imparting instruction to others. In this manner a body of accomplished, earnest, and devoted teachers would go forth from academies and high schools to take possession of the length and breadth of the land, that they might diffuse over it the light of learning, the cheering influence of correct moral sentiments, and the warmth of piety. And on this subject we have much to hope.

Since the revival of literature in the 14th century, there probably never was a time when the subject of education attracted a more deep and universal attention than it does at the present. In Great Britain, to say nothing of continental Europe, and in our country, the philosophic statesman, who bestows his thoughts and his efforts on the great objects of political economy, that he may thus promote the prospects and permanent welfare of his country; the man of letters, who endeavors, through the medium of the press, to refine and elevate the public taste; the man of enlightened piety, who labors to prepare men for heaven,—unite in considering education as the grand instrument of promoting the weal or wo of human kind; while those who look only at their own immediate benefit, or that of their children, are disposed, many of them, to consider it when properly conducted as the certain means of personal success in life.

The importance of education may be seen not only in its direct influence in elevating and improving the character of him who enjoys it, but likewise in its various bearings upon government and religion. We may talk as much as we please of a government of equal laws, which secures the welfare of the whole with the least possible encroachment on the liberty of the individual; it will still be true that despotism will take its place, unless those who are governed are educated to understand their rights and the means of maintaining them.

We may talk as much as we please of the efficacy that religion gives to the laws, by ensuring their conscientious execution, while it diffuses through the community a healthful moral feeling; still it will be true that, without the influence of education, it will be converted into the wild dreams of enthusiasm or the sullen stupor of bigotry. Of the pillar upon which the structure of our national happiness rests, general intelligence is the pedestal, religion the shaft, and government the capital. Let either of these be shaken from its place, and the fabric falls.

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**LECTURE VIII.**

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**ON**

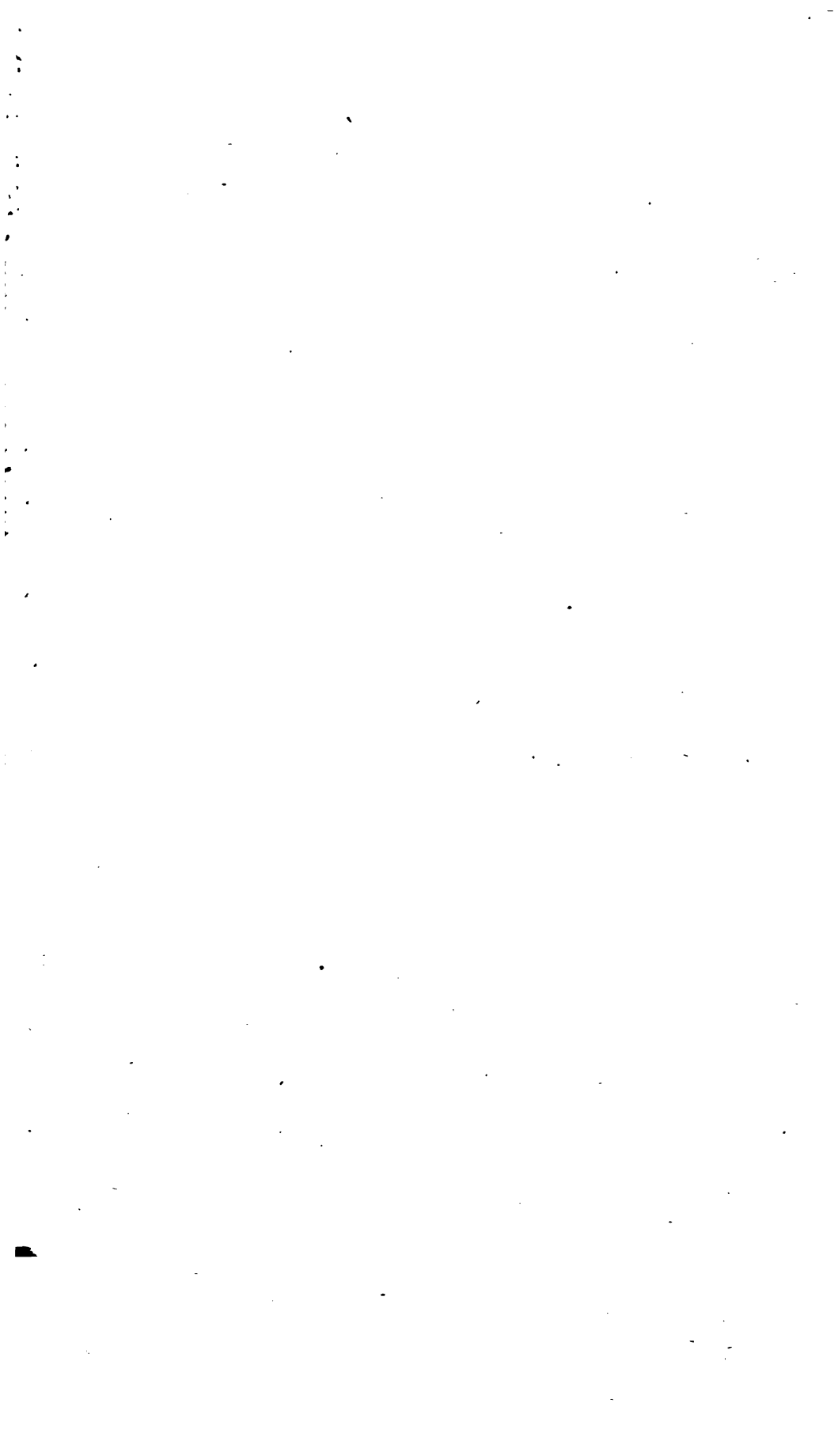
**NATURAL HISTORY,**

**AS A BRANCH OF**

**COMMON EDUCATION.**

**BY CLEMENT DURGIN.**

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## NATURAL HISTORY.

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THE object of this lecture is to invite your attention to the subject of Natural History, and to urge its claims to be introduced as a branch of common education. In discharging my duty on this occasion, it will not be expected that I should treat the subject as if it were new to the members of this Institute. It gives me pleasure to believe, that I am addressing those who duly appreciate the importance of this study, and who are disposed to give an indulgent consideration to the expediency of adding it to the branches already taught in common schools. Whatever shall dignify the profession of a teacher by the importance of his instruction, or promote his usefulness by enabling him to extend his labors to those subjects, which are calculated to give him an honorable rank in society, I feel assured, will meet with your respectful attention.

In stating some of the reasons why Natural History should receive the particular attention of schools, and in sketching a few of the outlines of the study, and the advantages to be derived from it, I shall omit those minute details, upon which, more particularly, depend its charm and intrinsic value.

Free schools are among the most valuable of civil institutions, and should be ever under the watchful eye and guardian care of every friend of virtue and civil liberty; and so far as this association can extend its influence or lend its aid, it ought to see that the republic of letters receive no harm.



It is certainly a noble purpose of this Institute to discover and apply the best methods of teaching the various branches of education ; and I speak with due deference, when I say, a higher motive does not exist ; the attention of man cannot be awakened to a more important object, than that of making himself and others happier, by understanding and teaching the principles of truth and duty. What then is the education which we should promote ? In its most extensive acceptation, it comprehends whatever may have any good influence in developing the mind, by giving direction to thought or bias to motives of action. To lead infancy in the path of duty, to give direction to an immortal spirit, and teach it to aspire by well doing, to the rewards of virtue, is the first step of instruction. To youth, education imparts that knowledge whose ways are usefulness and honor, and by due restraint and subordination, makes individual to intertwine with public good in a just observance of laws, comprehending the path of duty. To manhood, "it leads him to reflect on the ties that unite him with friends, with kindred, and with the great family of mankind, and makes his bosom glow with social tenderness ; it confirms the emotions of sympathy into habitual benevolence, imparts to him the elating delight of rejoicing with those who rejoice, and if his means are not always adequate to the suggestions of his charity, soothes him at last with the melancholy pleasure of weeping with those who weep." To age, it gives consolation, by remembrance of the past and anticipation of the future. Wisdom is drawn from experience, to give constancy to virtue ; and amidst all the vicissitudes of life, it enables him to repose unshaken confidence in that goodness, which, by the arrangement of the universe, constantly incites him to perpetual progress in excellence and felicity. Education is the growth and improvement of the mind. *Its great object is immediate or prospective happiness.* That then is the best education, which secures to the individual and to the world the greatest amount of permanent happiness ; and that the best

system, which most effectually accomplishes this grand design. How far this is accomplished by the present system of education is not easily determined ; but that it fails in many important considerations, cannot admit of a doubt.

It is feared, that, by a great majority, a wrong estimate is made of education. Is it not generally considered as a *means* which must be employed to accomplish *some other purpose*, and consequently made subservient and secondary to the employments of life ? Is it not considered as being contained in books, and a certain routine of studies, which, when gone through with, is believed to be accomplished, and consequently laid by, to be used as interest may suggest or circumstances demand ? *Education comprehends all the improvement of the mind, from the cradle to the grave.* Every man is what education has made him, whether he has drunk deep at the Pierian spring, or sipped at the humblest fountain. The philosopher, whose comprehensive mind can scan the universe, and read and interpret the phenomena of nature ; whose heaven-aspiring spirit can soar beyond the boundaries of time, indulge in the anticipation of immortality, and discern in the past, the present, and the future, the all-pervading spirit of benevolence, is equally the child of education, with him, whose soul proud science never taught to feel its wants, and know how little may be known. If it is education, then, whose power metes out condition, and happiness or misery, what profession should rank so honorably as that which controls and directs it ; and upon whom rest such high responsibilities, as upon those who are intrusted with the charge of forming the human mind !

It is often a cause of deep regret, that education answers so imperfectly its design ; and I believe that all experienced teachers will concur with me, that much of our labor is apparently thrown away ; that much of our exertion is baffled and counteracted by circumstances beyond our control : and it is very problematical, whether all the means and plicances of

this inventive generation, shall add much to the permanent advancement of mental cultivation.

The experience of centuries is before us upon the important subject of education, and yet no age perhaps has exhibited such excitement, change, and experiment as this. These are good indications, as they exhibit the exertions of an immortal nature, striving to discover and apply a greater good than has yet been spread over the face of society; but it is no less important to know when to rest satisfied with experiment, and to learn how best may be applied the materials already at our command. It may be well for those, whose duty it is to investigate the cause of our grievance, to examine with a scrutinizing suspicion into many of the boasted improvements of the day; to see if there is not more show than substance. Should it be discovered, that many of the facilities for teaching are but *troublesome conveniences*, and that many books now in use are so far simplified as to be destitute of nutrition, a remedy can easily be suggested. It may be, that hereafter it will be ascertained, that nature never intended a child should learn to walk on crutches, or think by a machine. This age stands preeminent for the application of power to the movement of locomotive engines; and in its all comprehensive sphere this power kindly lends its aid to propel the mental energies, saving to the community an immense amount of painful labor and hard thinking; and so vivid is the prospect in the vision of some romantic pioneers, that their advancement before their less zealous brethren, already enables them to descry a railroad cut to the highest pinnacle of the hill of science, along whose flower-strown path, the velvet cushion of a steam carriage shall bear the sons and daughters of literary distinction, with an ease and rapidity truly astonishing. It is ardently expected, that it will soon be as easy to acquire eminence in this country as it is to inherit it in any part of Europe.

It is not for me to predict what will be the result of such sanguine expectations. I acknowledge no man my superior in

ardent wishes for improvement in systems of education ; but if I may be permitted to give an opinion, I would say, that whatever shall attempt to relieve the mind from labor, necessary to its growth, or by explanation and illustration to supersede the necessity of vigorous thought and diligent application, must be injurious to the cause of sound learning, and can foretoken nothing more inviting, than a barren intellect and an empty brain.

A part of the evils, under which education at present labors is undoubtedly attributable to the system itself. It is often a subject of remark, that so little of school education is carried into the actual business of life ; that what was considered dry and uninteresting at school, is soon forgotten after the pupil is disengaged from the thralldom of early years, and takes his place in the community, where his own powers of mind are, for the first time, brought into exercise. Nor is this a source of wonder. I ask any instructor to call to mind the present routine of common education, and tell me how much of it is calculated to develope the mind. We will not enter upon the disputed point whether all ideas, or the elements of knowledge, are implanted in the mind through the medium of the senses acting upon external objects, or whether they are innate in the mind, and evolved or brought out by the exercises of the senses. One thing appears to be certain ; we were born with certain instincts and feelings, which are the result of our organization, and we are endowed with the powers of perception and memory ; and from these must proceed all our knowledge. But we would inquire how much of present instruction is made to retain its influence in after life. Are we told that we have only time to learn what is absolutely useful, to enable us to discharge our several duties, and that all knowledge which cannot be brought to aid us in our daily labors to obtain a livelihood is useless, its acquisition is time misspent ? We cannot envy such an one the pleasure of so humble an estimate of the human mind or the value of education. It is true, we

have only time to learn and practise what is useful. What then is useful knowledge? What should be taught? That is useful knowledge, which makes us wiser and better—that should be taught and practised, which will secure the greatest amount of permanent happiness. By the condition of our being, it becomes necessary to learn first what may contribute to our immediate wants; but our wants are always immediate. To say we should teach what ought to be practised in after life, conveys a complete idea of the term education.

The usual branches of a common education, are taught for their indispensable utility. We make complaint of the amount of knowledge acquired, and the want of thoroughness; and when it is remembered, that a part or all of the first twelve or fourteen years of life, is spent at school, it must be confessed that less is accomplished than might reasonably be expected. In this time, a small capital of ideas ought to be accumulated, to enable the individual to live without becoming entirely dependent on others; at least, he ought to be enabled to understand what shall be of daily occurrence to him. It is the fortunate lot of a great majority of mankind, to be obliged to labour for the means of existence. They consequently have little time for study; they acquire ideas slowly from books, and trust to the passing events of the day for the topics of thought and conversation. A vast amount of useless thought is thus expended on low and trivial subjects; and social intercourse, which might be made subservient to the noblest purposes of our being, improvement and happiness, is too often degraded by folly, or poisoned by intemperance. But what shall prevent the mind's abasement? At that interesting age when the intellect begins to assume its manly features, and needs, more than ever, something to nourish and direct it, the feeble stock of early acquisition is insufficient to its support, and the character then becomes the child of accident and the sport of chance. There is evidently too little in common education,

for which, in after life, memory will pay her tribute to early instruction.

To obviate this misfortune, it is proposed to interpret to youth the rudiments of that great book, the works of nature ; to enable them to read and understand the ceaseless wonders and boundless perfections there displayed. It is not desirable that the study of Natural History should be introduced to the exclusion of any branch of common education now taught ; all that is desirable is, that it be permitted to take its appropriate rank, and receive its merited attention. The natural sciences are neglected, to the great injury of mankind, in what most intimately concerns them, their happiness. Happiness, it should be remembered, is not only the great object of education, but of life itself. Whatever augments this, is the soul's great good ; not that effervescence of feeling, which agitates a giddy mind, and, like the mists of the morning, is soon to pass away, and leave behind its damp and chillness ; but an inwoven, deeply rooted enjoyment, rising from the fountains where reason and philosophy, nature and art combine and mingle all their sweets. In that hard doom which bound man to daily toil for his subsistence on the hostile earth, we behold the tokens of mercy, that by the constitution of his nature, he is enabled to convert all the objects around him into sources of pleasure. It is this capacity to see and enjoy beauties in the works of creation, that we would cultivate, making all things answer the double purpose of supplying our wants, and administering to our enjoyment.

Contemplate for a moment the condition of a human being, and the means ordained for his existence. His feeble frame is invigorated by the life-giving air ; his eyes brighten to look upon and enjoy a pleasant world, and his ears learn to distinguish the varieties of sound. Nature has placed him in a world of organized things, all of which lend their influence to develop his immortal spirit. His senses were given him to be the ministers of thought and feeling, between the world

within and the world without. It is the office of education to regulate this influence, to determine whether this child shall be the gloomy savage, or the enlightened philosopher.

It has never entered the imagination of man to conceive of the amount of rational enjoyment there is in the storehouse of nature, unless he has enlisted his feelings in her cause. Books may be read and be forgotten. The avocations of after life may leave us no time for their perusal, but the volume of nature is always open before us; in every walk, in every scene of duty, its voice may be heard to instruct and delight us. Escape her influence you cannot. "It raineth on the just and the unjust." The vegetable kingdom in its verdant beauties, the insect tribes with all their varying wonders, the birds, that luxury of nature, and all the animals that people earth and sea, are, to the natural philosopher, objects of interest. He can see design and perfection in the insect that sometimes annoys him; in the bird that sings or preys upon its brother; and in the animals that administer to his support, or plunder his subsistence: even in the inanimate earth, he finds the materials of happiness; and, when he has hewn his granite tomb, it adds one consolation to his common allotment, to reflect, that, while his spirit shall dwell with the First Cause, his dust reposes in the first monument of earth's existence.

Natural History, in its full extent, embraces the name and description of every object of the material world, together with their changes and phenomena. Although every part of nature is interesting, it cannot be expected that a familiar acquaintance with all, can be the favored lot of many. Life, exclusively devoted to this study, would fail to comprehend it; and after the genius of ages has lent its light to discover and record the wonders of creation, much remains for future industry to accomplish. It is not, however, in the hope of adding any thing new, to the long catalogue of natural objects, that I now urge its claims to the attention of the teacher; it is indeed hoped, that discovery has not yet furled her wings forever, but that

sons and daughters are to be born to science in this favored land ; I would not, however, urge further conquest ; I only ask for the cultivation of what we already possess. The extent of Natural History might be considered as an insurmountable difficulty to its introduction, as a branch of common education. If you look at it in books, it is indeed forbidding. Its long catalogue of names is so appalling, that few have the courage to attack, and still fewer the good fortune to conquer. Yet these are no objections to it as a study, much less to its value or expediency.

The object of common instruction is to impart important and general ideas ; to explain the principles upon which knowledge is founded, as landmarks to guide the pupil in the onward path of life. However much it is to be regretted, that the great mass of mankind receive but a scanty education, considering the circumstances under which they live, it is no reason why the fountains of knowledge should be locked up, lest

"Shallow draughts intoxicate the brain."

Knowledge, however little, is valuable, provided it be useful, and made subservient to life, and life's great aim. In the time usually devoted to common education, nothing more is attempted than the simple rudiments of the branches taught ; so in Natural History, we can expect only to introduce the pupil into that sublime temple, paved with gems, decorated and perfumed with flowers, and made radiant with life and animation.

On this extensive subject I am permitted to speak of but few of its prominent features. In teaching, I would begin where nature intended, at home, and explain the objects immediately around us. In this department, books for the pupil, and scientific arrangement with the teacher, are minor considerations. *The object is to teach a knowledge of things rather*



than of *words* ; to study nature in her own livery, rather than in the drapery of art.

In Mineralogy, the names and uses of the different substances are easily remembered by the pupil, and as they are always before him, an acquaintance with them opens an extensive field of rational enjoyment, which will fill with pleasure many a vacant hour in after life. One of the most obvious advantages arising from the study of the natural sciences, is the habit of discrimination which it teaches. To learn to distinguish, by a careful comparison, the less obvious differences in specimens apparently the same ; to comprehend at a glance the distinguishing features of others ; to observe the various and beautifully formed crystals, and to remember the different purposes to which the minerals are appropriated in the arts and economy of life, all combine to give that power of discrimination, which constitutes, to a very considerable extent, mental superiority. Another advantage of great importance, derived from this study, is that it can be understood by the pupil. I wish I could with equal truth bestow this high encomium upon all the subjects now employed to develop the youthful mind. Nature's teachings are always simple, though sometimes sublime ; and the child, who has been led to admire the sparkling gems found upon the surface of the earth, may at a riper age be taught to comprehend the more sublime features of nature, which modern Geology has revealed. In the composition and structure of the earth, there is a grandeur displayed, that almost mocks the creative imagination. The extensive vale, with its rich, luxuriant mould ; the rocky hill, shorn of its verdant glories ; and the towering mountains,

" Whose vast walls  
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,  
And throned eternity in icy halls  
Of cold sublimity"—

are the displays of that power, whose agents have broken down

the solid barriers of earth, and scattered the surface with their fragments—have scooped out the beds of lakes and rivers, and in sand and stone marked the boundaries of seas and oceans. In the effects of earthquakes and volcanoes, we catch a glimpse of the hidden energies of nature; and in each recording stratum of earth's progressive state, we read the memorials of other times and other beings, when the deep foundations were broken up, and in oblivion were buried the countless races of former ages, whose fossil relics are all that now remain, to tell of their existence or the catastrophe which overwhelmed them.

The science of Chemistry cannot be too strongly recommended as a branch of common education, as it is more immediately connected with our welfare and happiness than most other subjects. It acquaints us with the nature of the material world, the influences of different substances upon each other and upon ourselves, and unfolds the great laws of nature, by which the ceaseless changes of organization and decomposition are effected.

The knowledge derived from the natural sciences is not confined to the objects of nature, but it sheds its light on every other department of learning. Chemistry teaches, that changes, by combustion or decomposition, are not a loss of matter, but a different state of being. It coincides with revelation in proclaiming the immortality of the soul, in the attested fact, that nothing can be annihilated; while to Geology is reserved the honor of confirming, from nature, the doctrine of miracles. Geology declares that this earth was long inhabited by countless races of animals, before it became the abode of man. Comparative Anatomy establishes the fact, that man could not have ascended, by gradual improvement, from any other race of animals. His introduction into this world must then have required an absolute creation: and this was a miracle, an event which the established laws of nature could not have

accomplished. If the doctrine be proved in one instance, it will obtain in all.

Living as we do amidst the wonders of creation, where all seem to subsist by a miraculous power, nothing delights us more than the various aspects, which the ceaseless changes of the year produce. In spring, after having escaped the long confinement of winter, with what delight do we hail each springing blade or opening flower; our hearts expand with the vernal blossom, and our feelings awake to livelier emotions, as we behold the daily progress of vegetation, dressing the landscape in smiles and loveliness. Among all created beings, it is alone the high prerogative of man, to comprehend and enjoy the works of nature. The influence arising from rural scenes is kindly calculated to elevate and refine our feelings, and to impart that sweet and amiable disposition, which is at once the most valuable and endearing accomplishment of our nature. As "an undevout astronomer is mad," so an unamiable lover of nature is an unnatural monster.

" All natural objects have  
An echo in the heart. This flesh doth thro' I,  
And has connexion by some unseen chain,  
With its original source and kindred substance.  
The mighty forest, the proud tides of ocean,  
Sky-clearing hills, and, in the vast of air,  
The starry constellations, and the sun,  
Parent of life exhaustless—these maintain  
With the mysterious and breathing mould,  
A coexistence and community."

Perhaps no part of nature offers more pleasing attractions than the vegetable kingdom. The study of Botany is eminently calculated to awaken genius, to correct the taste, and to give a glow and richness to the imagination. It is certainly to be lamented, that this useful and highly ornamental branch of knowledge is so much neglected. Whether this arises from the apparent difficulties in the science, or the im-

perfect mode of teaching it, cannot be easily determined; certain it is, that it is worthy the attention of all rational beings, who hope to spend a life of happiness amidst the budding glories of a spring, the ripening summer, and the bounties of the autumnal year.

In teaching this subject to children, little dependence should be placed on books, the hard names there employed will tend to wean rather than to engage the attention. Familiar lectures upon the objects themselves, combine most of the advantages desirable, and if a judicious management be preserved, the pupil will soon find himself possessed of those leading facts which will enable him to understand the changes, and interpret the phenomena of the vegetable kingdom. A strict attention to method and scientific arrangement, cannot be too urgently recommended to those who wish to become proficient in the study; but care should be had, that too much be not undertaken in the case now under consideration. It must be remembered that, of the time devoted to a common education, very little can be given to the study of nature; that little should be given to nature herself, and to nature at home. The study of rare and curious plants, exotics, is indeed pleasant to those who have leisure; but our object now is to make the pupil acquainted with that part of the vegetable kingdom, immediately around him, amidst which he is probably destined to spend his life: not to teach him the beauties of the tropical regions, and leave him ignorant of those of his home. Instances are not uncommon, where individuals can repeat all the names of green-house plants, but know not the name or nature of those, that spring up by their daily path, and which, if far brought, would be considered equally beautiful with their more favored sisters. This disposition to exile the mind from home is among the leading propensities of our nature. We send our thoughts and sympathies abroad, and expend them on useless subjects, when they should be employed at home; nor is this peculiar to one subject; instances are too frequent

where men can read Latin and Greek fluently and correctly, who can neither spell, write, or read their native tongue, accurately.

Among the most interesting parts of plants are flowers. Their endless varieties of form, color, and odors, never fail to excite our admiration of that wonderful display of Infinite perfection, exhibited in their matchless hues and inimitable structure.

"He, who hath no love of *flowers* in his soul,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils."

The vacant moments of life are often beguiled of their pains by these emblems of purity and innocence. They please us by their beauty, they please us by their fragrance—even their evanescence pleases us, and we hail their return with a joy which would be unknown, were they the abiding objects of creation. The pleasure derived from flowers is greatly enhanced by a knowledge of their parts, and the important functions they perform in the economy of nature; the instructed eye will perceive beauties which must remain hidden to the untaught vision.

A few general ideas will comprehend the foliaceous system of plants, in which may be found much useful information—such as the general structure of the leaves, and the purposes which they answer in the growth of the vegetable—that by them the sap is elaborated, in the same manner as the blood in the lungs of animals, by the absorption and decomposition of air—the means employed by nature to renew them the following year, by buds in the temperate and cold regions, but by another process in the torrid zone. Vegetable physiology, including the structure and growth of plants, is itself an exceedingly interesting subject, easily taught and comprehended.

One of the noblest occupations, which engages the active powers of man, is agriculture. As it is the support of all others, so should it rank first in point of dignity. Its claims to

superiority over manufactures and commerce, demand that the man should not sink below his profession. As a large proportion of those, who receive a common education, will become tillers of the earth, we know of no way in which they could be more efficiently benefited, than by teaching them a knowledge of the soils and their productions, amidst which they are to employ their labor and spend their days. Of scientific agriculture, our country has much to learn, before the husbandman can reap the full reward of his exertions. Horticulture is beginning to strew its flowers and fruits along the path of healthful industry, giving fragrance and richness to the beauties of nature. It is ardently hoped that an improvement in education will do something to free agriculture from its abasement, caused by the habits, prejudices, and want of information in too many of its worthy followers.

It is an old saying that nothing was made in vain; yet what a vast number of living creatures there are, as well as of plants, of whose importance or connexion in the economy of nature, we are ignorant. How much yet remains to be accomplished, before man can become the interpreter of nature, to which his rank entitles him, and which his improvement demands.

The condition of our being makes it incumbent upon us to understand the nature of that system of things, of which, we form a part, and from which we derive our subsistence. To know ourselves, would comprehend a knowledge of almost every thing else; but no knowledge is more interesting or more useful, than that which is derived from the study of nature. Our existence is as intimately connected with the elements around us, as is that of a plant; and it is pleasing to know how we live and move. This inquiry would show us the importance of the study now under consideration. How intimately connected is the continuance of life with air and heat; and these alone, in their various phenomena, open a wide field for observation. From the earth, we draw most of the solid mate-

rials which enable us to hold dominion over nature. A knowledge of these, and their application, inwoven as they are into every department of civilized society, is no less useful than interesting. We derive our food from the earth ; but are unable to subsist upon its crude materials. Established then, between us and the fountain of our existence, is the great laboratory of animal life, the vegetable kingdom, which opens to us a field of boundless extent and variety. From the vegetable kingdom we derive much of our food and clothing. It furnishes the softer materials for building our houses and machines, and enables us to construct the noble ship, and navigate it to all parts of the earth, thereby extending the boundaries of commerce and civilization, giving to the less, the luxuries of the more favored climes, and making the nations of the earth one great community. Our interest, our welfare, and our happiness, all combine to invite and urge us to study this delightful part of creation.

A stronger claim, arising from sympathy, is urged upon our attention by the countless races of animals, which people the air, the earth, and the ocean. In viewing the forms and habits of animals, we are led to bestow on them a certain capacity, or intellect, some traits of which are exhibited by them in a wonderful degree. We imagine them susceptible of pleasure and pain, and endowed with the nobler qualities of our nature, such as love, courage, and gratitude. These, together with the multiplied relations, which animals hold in the grand economy of nature, among themselves, and to us, always come home with a pleasing interest to all minds, in all ages. No study is better calculated to unite the twofold purpose of amusement and instruction than this. What an immense number of human beings are supported on the flesh of animals. Millions are daily sacrificed for food and clothing. Almost every animal is taken for food in some parts of the earth ; while feathers, fur, wool, silk, and skins, are converted into articles of dress. Oil, spermaceti, wax, tallow, afford us light ; and bone, ivory, pearl, shell, horn,

whalebone, hair, bristles, are all made to administer to our wealth and happiness. This fact that animals supply our wants to such an extent, ought to excite our interest in their history. The favorite mistress of the Indian hunter is robed in less spoils of animals, than the votary of taste and fashion in refined society. The ox and the kid have yielded up their lives to furnish their skins for a lady's shoes. The whale sent its oil from the arctic regions to dress the leather, and the swine lent its lard and bristles, and the bee its wax, to assist in the manufactory. For her dress, silkworms, in multitudes have toiled and died. The sheep silently relinquished her fleece, to form the outer robe, on whose borders the marten, the otter, the ermine, or the sable, holds a conspicuous place. From the ears are suspended, curiously wrought, the mother of pearl, brought from the depths of the tropical seas; the turtle has been robbed of its shell, and the cow of her horns, to be transferred as ornaments to the lady's head, while the rich plume of feathers, and the ivory fan show us, that the ostrich and the elephant have not escaped this general destruction. The representatives of twenty different animals, from the four quarters of the globe, frequently unite in a lady's wardrobe. In some instances, whole tribes of men subsist almost entirely on a few species of animals. The Esquimaux and the Laplanders turn the reindeer to a better account than Boniface did his ale. They not only eat and drink and sleep upon this useful animal, but convert it into many other purposes in their simple economy.

Some of the domestic quadrupeds are the faithful companions of man in every part of the globe, rewarding his care and protection by their clothing, their milk, and their flesh. It is interesting to learn the changes which all domestic creatures undergo by cultivation; and, in an agricultural point of view, this knowledge is highly useful. Some scientific knowledge of animals, their form, structure, disposition, and modes of living, should be regarded as a valuable portion of every education. The



number of objects in Natural History, seem to point it out as the appropriate field for the development of the young intellect. It suits well the restless disposition of childhood, when no one object pleases for a long time; and, unlike most other subjects, this retains its interest in after life: he who loves a flower in youth, will love it when he is old. The taste for nature must be planted early in life, to enable its possessor to enjoy a ripened harvest.

Every thing which the Deity has created is worthy of our attention.

"Nature has nothing made so base, but can  
Read some instruction to the wisest man."

The subject of Entomology, or the history of insects, is less understood in this country than that of any other department of natural science. This arises, perhaps, either from the circumstance that the knowledge of insects is obtained at a great expense of patient industry and acute discrimination, or from a want of taste, arising from a want of information in this most interesting department of animated nature. It is true, that few studies demand a more untiring devotion, than that of Entomology; and it is also true, that there is little in it which can be turned to a cash account; reasons sufficiently powerful to induce many individuals to keep at a respectful distance, and perhaps, as is usual in such cases, to put on their contempt to hide their ignorance.

The wonders of creative wisdom are no where more strikingly displayed than in the insect tribes. Every part of matter amidst which we live and move, swarms with myriads of beings, countless and various as the leaves of the forest, assuming every color that beauty could suggest, every form that the imagination can conceive, and, in perfection of powers and adaptation of parts to the circumstances of their existence, equalled by no other part of the animal kingdom. Numerous

and various as they are, minute as are their bodies, and transitory as is their existence, they are nevertheless bound by certain laws of their natures, which are readily perceived and explained. With no part of this living world are we more intimately connected than with the subjects of Entomology. Some, as the bee and silk worm, administer to our wants and enjoyments; others, whose design is less obvious to us, answer undoubtedly equally important purposes in the great economy of nature. The happy myriads that gambol in a summer's sun; the worm that gnaws at the root of our vegetable, that strips our fruit trees of their leafy glories, or that spins our costly garments; the blights of spring, and the locusts of autumn, spreading dismay and famine; and the coral insect, building its habitation mountain high from the fathomless depths of the ocean, to become the destruction of commerce, or the foundations of islands, rich in oriental productions, are all objects of interest to a contemplative mind.

Some of the general facts connected with this subject, and which will always be found useful and interesting, are such as relate to the origin and formation of insects; that most of them are oviparous, but some are both oviparous and viviparous—that they pass through several stages of being, assuming different forms and subsisting upon different kinds of food—that their structure and organization is peculiar to themselves—their mode of respiration differing from other creatures, the air being admitted to a complicated circulation through the system by means of spiracles and tubes on various parts of the body, but never on the head—no insect breathing through the mouth,—and consequently they produce all their various sounds by their wings, legs, and other parts of the body. The changes which most insects undergo in their transformation from the vile worm to the gay wanderer from flower to flower, are curious in the extreme. At first, we behold an atom, which on being exposed to the genial warmth, bursts its shell and exhibits the feeble insect, capable of procuring its own food,

amidst which, by the instinct of its mother, it has been placed. In its larva state, it repeatedly casts its skin, until, arrived at its full growth, it ceases to eat, selects some place secure from danger, spins itself a shroud, and, in a temporary death, a vivid emblem of mortality, awaits its final consummation of being, when it emerges from its tomb, and, changed in every organ, feature, and capacity, rises into a higher state of existence, to fulfil the important purposes of its creation.

No subject is more fruitful of moral instruction than this:—

“ Who can observe the bee and ant,  
And not provide for future want ! ”

The admonitions to duty and perseverance, the example for self devotion to each other's welfare, rise at every stage of investigation into the habits of economy of these little creatures. Every department of creation is full of interest ; in all we see enough to admire, but we do no injustice by the comparison, in saying, that no part of animated nature presents so much to feast our wonder and astonishment as this. The habits and labors of the bee have been admired in all ages ; their industry and economy in the construction of their inimitable habitations—the mathematical exactness in which the cells are proportioned—the division of labour at home and abroad—the collecting of honey and pollen—the care and attention to the young—the massacre of the drones, and the important functions of the queen, with the mysterious influence which her presence exerts over her loyal subjects, are among the displays of that faculty, which may be called animal reason, and which sometimes mocks at the boasted power of the human intellect, by a forecast and perception, unattainable by the wisdom and philosophy of man. A taste for the cultivation of the bee would add much to the numerous charms of our delightful country. Their history is a volume of useful instruction, and only needs to be known to be duly appreciated. The ant,

though a useless insect, compared with the bee, is in its history no less interesting and wonderful. The policy and labors of ants, their extensive habitations in the tropical regions, and the remarkable fact, that they keep vast numbers of aphides in a kind of domestic subjection, to furnish them with honey, guarded by them in summer, and protected in their cells during winter, give the air of romance to their history, and raise our admiration of that Power whose works are as perfect in an atom as in a globe. Design is no where more distinctly manifest than in the foot of a fly, which enables the insect by suction to walk in perpendicular and pendulous postures; or in the glow worm, whose shining light discovers her presence to her winged mate, herself being destitute of the means of flight. A limited knowledge of insects may often give pleasure to a summer ramble, and enliven many a lonely hour of pain and weariness. Although the objects of Entomology are insignificant when compared with the nobler races of animals, which more immediately affect our interest, yet of every one who delights to trace the designs of intelligence in creation, and understand and enjoy the world around him, this study will command the few moments in the intervals of life, necessary to obtain its leading features.

One of the most obvious beauties of Natural History is the great variety in form and features, every where presented to us,—an endless variety, arising from the combination of a few simple principles, readily perceived and comprehended. Take for example the oxygen of the atmosphere, as a supporter of life, without which, no plant or animal can exist. In its application, how various are the means employed by nature, over all whose works, from the least to the greatest, an equal care is extended. In all warm blooded animals, the air is received into the lungs, where it parts with its vital principle to renovate the blood and give health and vigor to the system. In reptiles, a different modification of the lungs and the circulating system, produces a corresponding difference in the temper-

ature of the body and the habits of the animal, enabling some of them to exist in a torpid state several months without eating or breathing. In fishes, we discover another arrangement, that of gills, so constructed as to absorb the oxygen from the water in its passage through them; and in many of the lower orders of aquatic animals, the surfaces of their bodies, like the leaves of plants, appear to perform this important function; while in insects, as has been observed, the air is circulated by means of numerous tubes, interlacing the whole system and communicating with openings in various parts of the body.

In the vegetable kingdom, how simple are the elements which compose the endless variety there displayed. Oxygen, carbon, and hydrogen, are the simple substances, which, modified by the law and directed by the influence of vegetable life, perform the ceaseless changes in form, color, and consistence, in the growth, decomposition, and renovation of this important part of creation. These elements accumulate and rise into magnificence and beauty, to fill nature's storehouse with riches and plenty; then again are scattered to recombine in different proportions in other substances, and thus preserve the harmony and order of nature. These general ideas are easily taught, and not soon forgotten.

What has been said of the advantage, derived from the study of the names, habits, and structures of the inferior objects of creation, will also be applicable to the higher races of animals, with the addition, that our feelings become enlivened as our interest is influenced. The great variety of animals inhabiting the water, will be found to possess a peculiar interest, arising from their adaptation to the element in which they reside. The ocean is the great abode of animal existence, and the provision made for the support of the various tribes, and the means employed to keep in check the more prolific species, are among the most obvious displays of Infinite Wisdom. For most of the animals, great and small, inhabiting the land, a common food is provided in the vegetable kingdom;

comparatively few species prey upon others. But in the ocean, it is different; from the small animalculæ, to which a drop of water is a sea, to the mighty whale,

"Whom God of all his works  
Created highest, that swim the ocean stream,"

the condition of the being seems to be, to feed upon and in turn become food to others. The monsters of the deep are interesting to us from many considerations; their gigantic forms, the enterprise and danger of their capture, and the various uses to which they are appropriated in the arts and domestic life, render their history pleasing. The same is true of the smaller inhabitants of that element. The herring visits us annually from its home within the arctic circle; the shad and salmon perform their yearly pilgrimage to the highlands of the country, in obedience to the dictates of their nature; and in every individual species something may be observed which will amuse and instruct.

Amid the profusion of living creatures that surround us, none bring to us livelier sensations than birds; their peculiar form, beautiful plumage, and graceful motion through the air, always delight us. They seem to be the ornamental part of animated nature, as flowers are in the vegetable kingdom. Winter spreads a gloom over the face of the landscape, which in summer was adorned in glittering splendor; and we feel the cold desolation as we survey the silent relics of the departed year; but when spring returns, our feelings are enlivened to hear the winged heralds of seed time and flowers, returned from the sunny vales of the south, bringing the same sweet notes that so often charmed our infancy, and, if the heart has kept its purity, still touches the sympathetic chord in the breast of manhood. In spring, they give an additional enchantment to the smiles of infant nature; throughout the summer, they delight and amuse us with sportive animation in their exuberance of joy and hilarity.

Ornithology has long been the favourite study of the naturalist, and perhaps no contemplation of nature is better calculated to impart kind and amiable qualities to the mind. From the golden dotted humming bird, smaller than many insects, to the rapacious condor of the Andes, whose wings extend through sixteen feet—from the humble denizen of the hedge row or the cottage roof, to the birds of paradise, beautiful,

As if dropped from some higher sphere,  
To tell us of the gorgeous splendor there;

and each intermediate grade in color, form, and modes of living, all open a storehouse of rational enjoyment, which we can obtain no where else. The names and characters of birds are easily learned, but these alone are not the most valuable part of this subject. The grand object of the study of Natural History is to *enjoy*, in elevated and refined feeling, the works of creation; to look upon all things with that calm complacency, which arises from an habitual contemplation of rural objects.

In the structure of birds, differing from all other creatures—in the circulation of air, not only in the lungs, but through the bones and feathers, for the purpose of making them lighter—in their food and habits of living—in the architecture of their dwelling, their eggs, and the parental care and attention for the young, we find abundant matter to amuse a young, or instruct a riper age.

As we ascend to the highest class of animals, the mammalia, we find new wonders open to us in their more complicated forms and diversity of powers. In this extensive class are included most of the large and small quadrupeds, inhabiting the land, together with the cetacæ of the ocean, comprising the various kinds of whales, walrussees, seals, &c. Consequently, the field of observation is as extensive and broad as the earth; but those varieties which immediately surround us, are comparatively few, and their history easily acquired.

Animal Physiology is a fruitful source of useful instruction, and should by no means escape the attention of the teacher or pupil. Digestion, the circulation of the blood, respiration, the wonderful mechanism of the eye and the ear, are among the most useful items of general information, and may always be brought with an enlivening interest into the monotonous routine of daily teaching.

Natural History would be entitled to our veneration, if it taught us only the general outlines of our own system. It is certainly to be lamented that ignorance and prejudice should have so long triumphed over reason, in forbidding that most useful of all information, the anatomy and physiology of our own system. How few there are, who understand their own organization, or know in what manner the human system is influenced by climate, food, and apparel, which would enable them to take the precautionary measures to guard against accident or disease. It can be easily and successfully taught in any school, even without drawings or preparations; and childhood might soon be divested of its timidity, if judicious teachers were permitted, by public opinion, to treat this subject in a manner worthy of human beings. Some attention to the leading features of anatomy and physiology, cannot be too urgently recommended to all who have assigned to them the important duty of directing the education of youth. Important are the advantages arising from even a limited knowledge of our bodies, so fearfully and wonderfully made. Time will not now permit me to enumerate these advantages, though the injudicious treatment of children, the intemperate habits in eating and drinking, and the injurious fashions of dress, which would be most signally benefited by this knowledge, call aloud on me to advocate the cause of philosophy, reason, and humanity.

In attempting to introduce the study of Natural History into schools, the first duty belongs to teachers themselves. To what extent teachers are generally qualified to instruct in the various branches of this science is unknown to me; but it would



not be surprising if it were found, that many had overlooked this, in qualifying themselves for the duties of their stations. Such owe it to themselves and their pupils, to combine industry with perseverance, until the desired object be obtained. One half a day in each week could not be better spent by a school, than in collecting and examining specimens of natural objects. This would tend very much to enliven the duties of teacher and pupil, and be productive of much good, besides the knowledge gained. The teacher should improve all occasions, when any rare and curious object is thrown in his way : the instruction of a few moments, spent in calling the attention of a school to such objects, at any time, will be remembered when hard studied lessons shall be forgotten. Natural History owes more to Linnæus than to any other individual ; and he attributed his early bias and love for the study of nature, to the remarks his father made upon a flower, in a ramble, when he was scarce four years old. This botanical lecture, he observed, formed an epoch in his scientific life.

We would not exalt the study of Natural History at the expense of any other ; we only wish it to occupy its appropriate place in education. What is life, but a school, where men and animals and things are the subjects of daily study ! \*

\* "Natural History is very little estimated, as it ought to be. Three considerations recommend it as a most important branch of study for boys and youths, in the school and academy.

1. I regard Natural History, when judiciously and faithfully taught, as one of the best preservatives against irreligion. Young people enter into life, in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, as ignorant of Natural History as a boy of his father's library, which he has only seen through the glass doors of the bookcase. The natural world, instead of a *living*, is actually a *dead* world to the mass of educated persons. They know little or nothing of its facts, and absolutely nothing of its science. It is not surprising, therefore, that most educated persons look upon the works of God, in the visible world, with as little emotion or thought, as upon the works of man. They have no settled opinion, no habitual feeling, that a tree is a piece of more admirable

In our country, where freedom of speech is uncontrolled, there is a want of something to engage the attention, and draw it off from those subjects of feverish excitement, which spread with such scorching influence in these days of modern reform. The mind will be active, and if it have not some useful subject upon which to spend its energies, it will feed on trifles. To remedy this, in part, we know of no better method than to interest the mind in observation of nature, which is always around us, to win our attention and call forth our imagination. Natural History is not the amusement of a day, but it opens

mechanism and workmanship, than the group of Laocoon, the Parthenon, the transfiguration of Raphael, or the church of St. Peters. But, if young people were thoroughly acquainted with the important and interesting facts of Natural History, and faithfully instructed in its curiosities and wonders, with an express view to illustrate the power, wisdom, and benevolence of God, can we doubt that they would grow up, with such deep and fixed opinions on those important points, as to have no avenue for doubts, either in early manhood, or in later years? Is it possible that youth can appreciate rightly these attributes of their Maker, Ruler, and Judge, when they are so lamentably ignorant of his works?

2. The second advantage to which I refer, is, that this knowledge, more than any other, except Religion, (and what is Natural History but the handmaid of Religion?) becomes a perpetual companion, by land or by sea, in the town or in the country.

3. A third consideration is, that the curious and interesting facts of Natural History are an inexhaustible and varied fund, for social intercourse; so that many an hour now passed in frivolous or useless, if not pernicious, conversation, would be both agreeably and instructively spent.

It appears to me, that an acquaintance with the Natural History of man, is more important to educated persons, and more worthy of high rank in the scheme of liberal education, than all the mathematics that are taught in colleges. I conceive Anatomy to be a far more valuable, instructive, and noble study for a young man, than spherics, conics, &c., and if the choice lay between mathematics, and the Natural History of the human species, I should prefer the latter, as a branch of College education."—GRIMKÉ.

an inexhaustible fund of enjoyment, by enabling us to perceive the beauties of nature. It unseals that book, in which are written the wonders of creation ; it raises the thoughts and feelings, refines the taste, corrects and improves the judgment, gives mildness to temper and amiableness to disposition, which soothe the frequent pangs along the rugged paths of life, and strew the vale of declining years with many a thornless flower, in the recollection of innocent enjoyments. It is the fountain of inspiration to the poet and orator, being the great source of metaphorical language, which gives a brilliancy to the imagination and force to eloquence. It inspires genius by giving it the elements of its action. It is the origin of painting, sculpture, and engraving ; and to every art that dignifies or adorns, it furnishes the material, and suggests the model. In teaching Natural History to children, then, we do but obey the dictates of nature, in introducing them to her countless wonders and varying scenes, where, if they wander, it is in innocence and light : we do but follow the footsteps of philosophy to her refreshing fountains, on whose flowery banks, manhood may pause to contemplate and admire, and age at the harvest become renovated by a remembrance of the past, and be blest in the anticipations of a spring, when itself and all things shall be clothed in loveliness and beauty.

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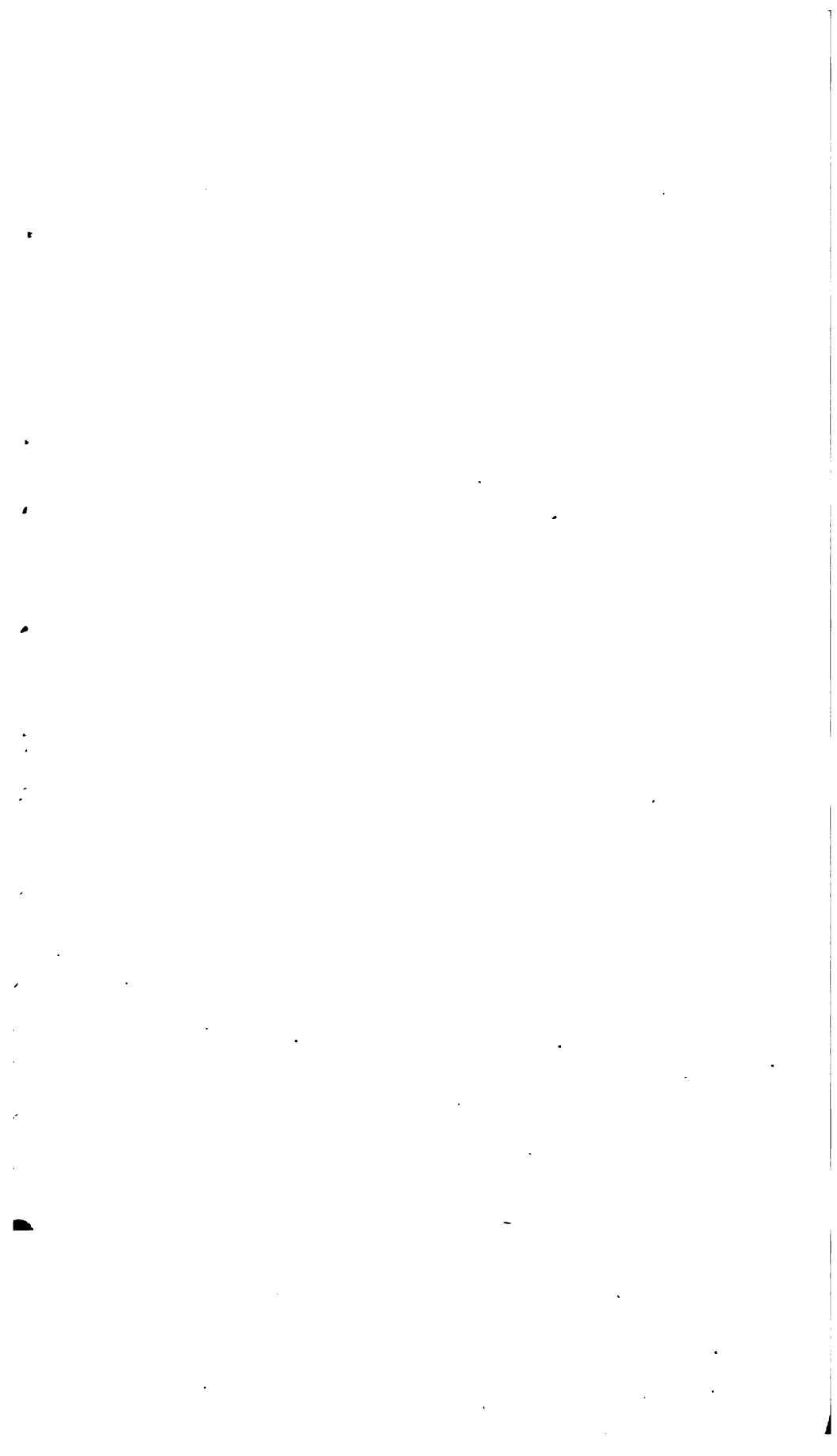
**PRIZE ESSAY**

**ON THE**

**CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL-HOUSES.**

**BY WILLIAM A. ALCOTT.**

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## R E P O R T .

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THE Committee, appointed by the Directors of the American Institute of Instruction, to examine the several Essays which have been offered "*On the Construction of School-Houses,*" and to award the Society's premium to the author of the best one, respectfully ask leave to

### R E P O R T :

That they have given the subject committed to them, that deliberate consideration which its practical importance to the great cause of common education seemed to them to require. They have carefully examined five Essays, with their accompanying plans; some of them being of considerable length, and all of them containing valuable suggestions upon the several topics discussed in them. And while the Committee would not be understood to predicate absolute perfection of any of them, they have unanimously agreed that the one offered by WILLIAM A. ALCOTT, of *Hartford, Ct.*, is decidedly the best. And they do hereby award to him the premium of TWENTY DOLLARS, appropriated by the proper authorities of the Institute for that purpose.

The Committee ask leave further to report, that pending their deliberations, they received a scientific and valuable communication from Mr. WOODBRIDGE, of *Hartford, Ct.*, upon the "*Size of School-Rooms ;*"—a topic intimately connected

with, or rather forming a part of, the more general subject discussed in the Prize Essay. In view of its merit, both as a distinct performance, and as an amplification of one topic of the subject proposed for the prize, the Committee herewith submit the document; and recommend that it be appended to the Prize Essay, and published with that, agreeably to the Resolve with which this Report concludes.

All which is respectfully submitted by your Committee.

JAMES G. CARTER.

E. BAILEY.

J. KINGSBURY.

1. *Resolved*, That the thanks of the Institute be presented to Mr. Woodbridge for his timely and valuable communication upon the "Size of School-Rooms."

2. *Resolved*, That the Prize Essay "On the best Construction of School Houses" be read before the Institute, at such time during its present session as convenience may suggest; and that, together with the document appended, it be printed under the direction of the Censors; and that each member of the Institute receive, on application, one copy gratis.

## CONSTRUCTION

OF

## SCHOOL-HOUSES.

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THAT the general arrangement and appearance of even inanimate things around us, have an extensive influence in forming our character, will hardly be questioned. Every object, and every individual we see, either renders us more cheerful and happy, or the contrary. The condition of those objects, therefore, which surround a collection of children, whether the number of those children be five, fifty, or one hundred, must of necessity have a very considerable influence in forming their dispositions, and giving a determination to their future character.

Nor is their present comfort a matter of indifference, any more than that of the same number of adults. Where is the parent to be found, who would select as a location for his dwelling, the junction of four roads, or a portion of the highway, or a sand-bank, marsh, or swamp? Or, who would choose, for this purpose, a bleak hill, a wilderness, or some lonely and secluded spot, rarely visited by man or beast? With a few misanthropic exceptions, mankind love to dwell in airy places, affording a pleasant prospect. They are fond of having shade and fruit trees, shrubs, flowers, fountains, and greensward around their dwellings. The number of those who prefer the disagreeable sight of barren hills, and fields, and sand-banks, or the nauseous and unwholesome exhalations of stagnant



water, the barn yard and the sty, to the fragrance and rich scenery alluded to, must certainly be small: yet what is more common than to find school-houses exposed to many of these evils, and sometimes to all of them combined? The strongest evidence is every where afforded, that in constructing and furnishing them, we too often consult our own convenience, rather than the comfort, welfare, or accommodation of our children. Location, size, structure, internal arrangement and furniture—all combine to force upon our minds the same conclusion. The many dark, crowded, ill-looking, and *sometimes* disorderly and filthy huts, to be found in the country, called, or rather *mis-called* school-houses, seem to have been provided as a kind of necessary evil, rather than as places of voluntary and cheerful resort for the offspring of the proprietors. In conformity with these views, we are told by a recent writer on this subject, that of forty school-houses with which he is acquainted in a single county, "*three fourths,*" as he judges, are "located without regard to the comfort, health, and happiness of the children. They stand in gloomy, unhealthy places, without a feature of beauty in the scenery around them."

Few, indeed, of the numerous school-houses in this country are well lighted. Fewer still are painted, even on the outside. Play-grounds, for common schools, are scarcely known. Hence the pupils are obliged to play in the road, exposed to every attendant danger, both physical and moral.

Nor are the internal arrangements more favorable. There is much suffering from the alternation of heat and cold, and from smoke. The feet of children have even sometimes been frozen. Too many pupils are confined to a single desk or bench, where they are constantly jostling or otherwise disturbing each other. The construction of the desks and benches is often bad. Little or no provision is made for free ventilation. Hundreds of rooms are so small that the pupils have not, upon the average, more than five or six square feet of surface each; and here they are obliged to sit, breathing impure

air, on benches often not more than six or eight inches wide, and without backs. Many of these benches are so high that the children's feet cannot reach within several inches of the floor. Thus suspended, between the heavens and the earth, they are compelled to remain motionless for an hour or an hour and a half together. These things ought not so to be. Their health and comfort are believed to be far more important than their progress in science; and in providing for their accommodation during the hours of study, these are the first points to be secured. *Health*, as well as *time*, is *money*; and it is a most mistaken economy which confines a child to those arrangements, and to that atmospheric impurity, which render him unfit for vigorous effort, and thus slowly, though surely, impair his constitution: for we impose by these means a far greater tax on the parent, than would be necessary in erecting the most spacious buildings, and furnishing ample and liberal accommodations.

Some of the above-mentioned evils arise from the fact that the centre of population of the district has usually determined the location of school-houses. But a central situation should be regarded as a matter of only secondary importance. The house should stand on an elevated spot of firm soil, at a moderate distance from any other buildings, or any public road. A few shade trees should be near, and if convenient, fruit trees. A piece of ground, consisting of from a quarter to half an acre, should be devoted to the purposes of the school, and enclosed by a fence or wall in such a manner as to prevent, at the pleasure of the instructor, any communication from without. The main building should be near the side of the enclosure adjoining the usual point of entrance. The wood should be kept in a separate building, as the danger from fire is thereby diminished, and the house can be kept more cleanly and airy. In the rear of these should be a spacious play-ground, part of which should be paved, and covered with a kind of roof, or awning, where recreations may be conducted in unfavorable

weather. Nearly of equal importance are a flower garden, a well or spring of good water, and facilities for washing. The rest of the enclosure may be devoted to the purposes of agriculture and horticulture, whenever these exercises shall come to be regarded as indispensable to every district school.

When the soil is not naturally firm, an artificial soil should be substituted; and the main building should always be elevated, at least two or three feet above the surface immediately around it.

The height of the house, if thus elevated, need not exceed a story and a half. This will give room for placing the windows higher than usual in the wall, a point which will be insisted on hereafter. The ceiling should be arched, the walls plastered, and whitewashed, or perhaps painted.

A building intended for about sixty pupils, should be 40 feet in length, by 30 in breadth. This is probably a greater than a medium number of pupils, but for a larger or smaller number, the same plan may be observed, increasing or diminishing the size of the building accordingly, though not in exact proportion to the increase or diminution of numbers, because the doors, entries, stove, &c., will occupy nearly as much space in a small house, as in a large one. For one hundred pupils, 48 by 40 feet is a convenient size; for fifty, 36 by 30; for thirty-six, 34 by 24. But a considerable number of the schools in the northern and middle States, contain fifty to sixty scholars, at least in the winter; and consequently require a building as large as is here contemplated. (*See the drawing, No. 1.*)

In the plan here proposed, separate entries (*a a*) for the sexes occupy the south end of the building, each of which is 15 feet in length, by 5 in breadth. Within these entries, a suitable number of wooden pegs are placed, at a proper height, and suitable distance from each other, for hats, coats, and cloaks; and a few benches or stools for the use of the smaller pupils, while adjusting their shoes, clothes, &c. The dimensions of the school-room itself are 35 by 30 feet, including

the instructor's platform. This platform (*b*) consists merely of an elevation of the floor across the north end of the room, to the height of 18 inches, and 4 feet in width; on which are a moveable desk and seat (*c*) for the instructor.

The seats and desks for the pupils, (*d*.) occupy the central part of the room, and are arranged in rows from north to south, in such a manner that the pupils face the instructor. There are eight rows, having seven desks in each row, with corresponding spaces or aisles, (*e*)  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide, between the rows. The desks are 2 feet long,  $1\frac{3}{4}$  feet wide, and the seats about a foot square. The latter, except those at the southern end of each row, are attached to the desks immediately behind them, in such a manner, that the front of each desk forms a back to the seat of the pupil who occupies the next.

The desks and seats are so constructed as to leave no shelves or cavities under them. Each seat is, in effect, a square box closed on all sides. It is well known to instructors that when the hollow under the seat is left open as a place of deposit for a hat, &c., or shelves furnished for books *under the desk*, playthings of various kinds, together with the shells of nuts, and the cores and stones of fruits, are accumulated here by indolent or vicious pupils, to such an extent as often to occasion much trouble. It is to prevent the possibility of evils of this kind, in part at least, that a different construction is recommended. With the same view, as well as to favor cleanliness, and purity of the air, all hats, spare clothes, provisions, fruits, &c., should be left in the entries. *Flowers* may, however, be permitted to remain in the room during the day time, as they purify, rather than injure the air.

The proper and most convenient place for the pupils' books and other apparatus, is a box or case in the front part of each desk. The relative position of this box will be illustrated by *drawing, No. 2*. Its width is 8 inches, and its depth about a foot, so as to receive the largest slates, atlases, and writing-books, when placed edgewise; for which purpose there

is a narrow division of the box, formed by a thin partition. The largest division is for books only. The lid, (c) when closed, forms a part of the upper surface of the desk. That part of the desk which forms the back to the next pupil's seat, is elevated about 3 inches above the level of the desk, both for his accommodation, and to prevent the lid of the book-case from falling over too far in that direction.

The height of the desks and seats is proportioned to the height of the pupils who occupy them. They also bear a certain proportion to each other. Those which are nearest to the instructor's platform are the lowest, and those which are most remote, the highest; both because the pupils who most need the instructor's aid will be nearest to him, and removed farthest from the noise which is sometimes unavoidable about the stove and entries; and because the view of the school from the platform will be more complete.

The particular arrangement of each seat and desk, is such as almost to compel the person occupying it to sit in an erect position. The edge of the desk will be directly over the edge of the seat. In writing, the arms will hang naturally by the side, while the flexure at the elbow will be such, that the lower portion of the arm, with the hand, will form a right angle with the upper portion, and rest lightly upon the desk. The desks will thus be much lower than is usual, but all parts of the body, as well as every limb, will be at the same time free and unconstrained. This is a point of vast importance. The most common position at the school desk is extremely unfavorable to the healthful action of the lungs, stomach, liver, &c., as well as liable to produce distortion of the spine, and consequent disease. Some have recommended desks gently sloping. My chief objection to this, is, that it is not common to meet with them in this form in the daily business of life. Not one in six of the pupils will write on a sloping desk after leaving school. Besides, the view of the instructor from his platform will be slightly obstructed, the general arrangement

less simple, and rather more expensive. On the proposed plan, the construction of the whole is simple, and by no means expensive. The boards forming the desk and book case, are supported by two broad pieces of plank placed upright at the ends, and by the seat attached to it in front.

Although the present plan admits of but fifty-six desks, yet there is a seat (*n*) attached to the fore part of each of the eight desks which are nearest the instructor's platform, which, instead of being, like the rest, about a foot square, are two feet in length. On these, eight small pupils, and in an urgent case sixteen, may be seated *without desks*. The whole number of pupils thus furnished with *seats* in the main room, would be seventy-two. These front seats will also answer another important purpose. Classes may sit here to recite to the instructor, or to witness experiments; and if smaller pupils happen to be occupying the seats, they can be transferred, for the time, to the stair (*m*) of the platform.

Thus the whole school will generally face the instructor, who can oversee them from his platform, and pass, with the utmost ease and facility, from one to another, to direct or aid them, inspect their books, book-cases, slates, writings, &c. If lessons are given, or exercises performed on the black boards, either over the instructor's platform or on the wall, they will be in full view of all the scholars, without moving from their seats. When a pupil wishes to leave his seat, it can be done without disturbing half a dozen others, or compelling them to rise every time he wishes to pass, as is often the case when the desks are connected. There will be more difficulty, it is true, in crossing from one space or aisle to another; but this will rarely be necessary. It will be better to pass around the north or south ends of the rows. When it is necessary, however, to cross from east to west, only *one* pupil is compelled to rise at a time.

The spaces between the outside rows of desks and the walls are 2 feet in width. If black boards or lessons are placed up-

on the walls, it is desirable that these outer spaces should be 4 feet wide, instead of two. It is not, however, indispensable; and my present purpose is to give the smallest space which will answer for the proposed number of scholars.

The instructor's platform may be occupied for various purposes. On it, the pupils may take their station to declaim, classes or individuals recite, and visitors be seated. Here, too, is an extensive black board, over which are *cases* for depositing apparatus, and for the school library. If the school has a museum, or collection of natural and artificial curiosities, it is convenient to have this also near the instructor; and if experiments are made in chemistry, or any of the other sciences, the platform will be very convenient for that purpose. The instructor will also have the means of keeping his eye, through the medium of the two windows at this end of the room, on the play-ground; and through the most northern windows on the west side, on the garden, and adjacent portion of the enclosure.

The stove stands near the entrances. Between the nearest row of desks and seats, and these entrances, there is a space (*oo*) unoccupied, except by the stove, (*k*) and other furniture about to be described. This space, 8 feet wide, extends across the whole width of the house. Between it and the first row of desks, are two movable black boards, or semi-partitions, (*ff*) each 12 feet in length, and 5 feet in height, consisting simply of boards painted black on both sides, and nailed to upright posts, supported in an erect position by being framed to cross pieces, or sills, three feet in length. Their uses will be mentioned presently.

This vacant space is naturally divided into two portions by the stove. Seats (*g*) are furnished to both; taking care, however, to leave sufficient room to pass the semi-partitions to the principal school-room. If the monitorial system is adopted in any of its various modifications, this will be a proper place for recitation. Indeed, let the system of instruction be what it may,

these spaces will furnish every advantage of separate recitation rooms, with but half the expense. The south side of the semi-partitions will furnish them with a black board. At other times, the instructor might use these places as an appropriate retirement for reproof or discipline. But I have principally in view another object still. The time, it is hoped, is not far distant when every school of any considerable size will be divided into two departments. When this period shall arrive, the female assistant teacher may occupy these apartments, with ten, twenty, or even thirty pupils, until the public mind shall be so thoroughly awakened to the importance of such an arrangement, as to erect, for the purpose, still more ample and commodious buildings.

The movable black boards also answer several other important purposes. The side towards the instructor will often be convenient as a black board for the main school. Being five feet high, they may also be placed in such a manner as to screen the pupils near it from that intense heat, which occasionally emanates from a stove, as well as from currents of air from the doors, when the pupils are coming and retiring.

The majority of existing school-houses are very imperfectly lighted, as has already been observed. But on the present plan, the windows (*w*) are so arranged as always to afford sufficient light; and if in excess, curtains should be interposed.

It is believed that the windows of a school-house ought to be elevated about 5 feet above the floor. The following are some of the reasons. 1st. It will in this way be more difficult to look out at them, and much trouble will thus be saved to the instructor. It will also preclude the necessity of nailing boards across the lower part of windows to prevent the pupils from looking abroad, as is sometimes done. 2. They are less liable to injury. 3. There will be less exposure of the pupils to currents of air. 4. This structure is favorable to ventila-



tion, especially if the upper part of the windows be made (as they ought to be) to be *lowered* at pleasure. 5. The light will not strike so directly upon the eyes of the pupils, as when the windows are lower in the wall. 6. Another reason of still greater importance is, that by having a broad space left below the windows, room is afforded for prints, paintings, engravings, maps, and charts; or for any other similar means of instruction.

The windows ought by all means to be furnished with curtains and blinds; and if the former are judiciously selected, they may be made to afford the material, or furnish suggestions, for many important and interesting lessons. It is desirable that paper curtains should be prepared expressly for school-rooms, under the direction of some individual who understands the wants and capacities of children.

Holes or windows should be made in the roof of every school-house, that the impure air may sometimes be suffered to escape in that direction. The proper place for these windows is in the roof, about two-thirds of the way from the south to the north end of the building. One method of raising the shutters and opening these windows is, by means of ropes fastened to their tops, and then carried over pulleys and suspended in the room. The windows may fall by their own weight; or if not, by means like those devised for raising them. There must, of course, be holes or spaces in the arched ceiling of the room, to correspond with these windows.

The floors of school-houses should be made of oak, or some very hard wood; not only because it resounds less, but because it is more durable. If the desks and seats were made of the same material, they would probably be less exposed to injury, especially from vicious pupils. For black boards a softer kind of wood is preferable. Linden, or bass wood, has been recommended.

The doors (*h*) at the north end of the room communicate with the garden and play-ground, and also serve for the ad-

mission of fresh air, either to cool the room, when necessary, or to aid in ventilating it.

Notwithstanding every arrangement hitherto proposed, it is obvious that the subject of *ventilation* may not receive that attention which its importance demands. Spacious apartments, like that which I have proposed, are indispensable, as well as a due regard to the number and position of the doors and windows. Still, if the latter are kept constantly closed, and the pupils are not permitted to stir from their seats oftener than once in an hour, or an hour and a half, their health may be seriously impaired. Respiration alone contaminates the air at a rate which is truly surprising to those who have not been accustomed to examine the subject. When to this source of impurity we add the effluvia which are constantly escaping from the surface of all living bodies, together with other causes which are at the same time operating, we can scarcely avoid wondering why the *immediate* injury sustained by the human constitution in confined rooms is not greater than we find it. Nothing but the fear of extending my remarks to an improper length prevents me from devoting several pages to this important subject. I cannot but indulge the hope, however, that it will soon be investigated, and the results presented to the public. At present I will only add, that after every precaution in regard to ventilation, which human wisdom can devise, every pupil should be required, and, if necessary, *compelled* to go out into the open air, at least once in an hour. Probably once in half an hour is not too often.

The best method of warming school-rooms is by means of air heated in some adjacent apartment, and conveyed into the room by pipes or funnels. When this course is not adopted, I prefer for the purpose an open stove, with either dry wood or charcoal. Much loss is sustained by burning *green* wood. The fore part of the stove should be towards the entrances, and pipe enough should be used to keep up as equable a temperature in the room as possible. During the cold season, fires

should be prepared about two hours before the time of opening school in the morning. The room may then be ventilated often, as the heated walls, floors, and furniture will quickly restore the temperature of the air. A thermometer is useful, and the heat may be graduated by it. The pupils should not be suffered to leave the school at evening in a profuse perspiration, as sometimes happens, but the temperature should be reduced gradually during the last hour of the afternoon, until they can go out with safety.

Without adverting to the subject of *personal* cleanliness, which indeed does not come within the scope of the present essay, I cannot refrain from urging the importance of paying the strictest regard to the purity of the walls, ceiling, floors, and furniture, by frequent washing, scouring, brushing, &c. Mats and shoe-scrapers at every door are indispensable; yet nothing is more generally neglected.

It is surprising, that while a large proportion of the dwelling houses in this country are painted, and the expense is deemed necessary in point of economy, we scarcely ever see a painted school-house. Would it not render the covering of these, as well as that of other buildings, more durable? But placing economy out of the question, what adult person is so destitute of taste, as not to prefer painted buildings even on account of the appearance? And are not children better pleased with handsome houses, fences, walls, &c., than with those of a contrary description?

If the walls in the interior of the school-room are painted, it is desirable to have it done with a reference to the improvement of the pupils. Numerous interesting and instructive scenes might thus be presented, both historical and descriptive. The floor should be level, rather than *sloping* (as some have recommended) towards the instructor. Every school will need some kind of time-piece, which should be placed over the instructor's platform, in full view of the pupils.

I have already said that every school ought to have a spacious play-ground. The means of performing gymnastic exercises should be afforded, but to what extent I am uncertain. But I cannot help anticipating a period when every common school will have the means of attending to agricultural and mechanical pursuits more or less every day, and be furnished with all the necessary *implements*, made of a proper size for the smaller, as well as the larger pupils. It is to be feared, however, that though strict economy, no less than the health of the pupils, is believed to require it, the day when they will come into general use, is still distant.

It may be objected, that the school-room here proposed, is larger, and consequently *more expensive than is necessary for common schools in country towns*. But it affords scarcely *nineteen square feet of surface*, that is, a space about *four feet square* to an individual: while it has been estimated that a space four feet square, and of the usual height of rooms, is the least which can be occupied for one hour by a pupil with safety. The air is supposed to be rendered entirely unfit for healthy respiration at the rate of a gallon a minute, or about a hogshead an hour. But as the carbonic acid, from its greater gravity, settles towards the floor, a hogshead of this air will reach about to the height of a child's head, who is sitting confined to the space above mentioned, or so nearly that he cannot avoid inhaling it.

Were not the detail too horrible, I might relate the dreadful story of destruction at Calcutta. At present I will only say, that one hundred and forty-six persons were confined to a room 18 feet square, for ten hours; and though there was one opening for the admission of air and light, only twenty-three persons were living at the end of that time. They were destroyed by the impure and poisonous air. Can children, in groups of fifty or one hundred, spend even *one hour* in rooms of similar dimensions, and escape wholly uninjured?

I visited a school not long since where there was about 30 feet of space, that is, an average of much *more* than 4 feet square, to an individual. I inquired if the room was not unnecessarily large. "By no means," said the teacher. "I should be unable to spare a foot of it." An able instructor once informed me that he visited a school-room in the city of New York, where more than twice even the last mentioned space was afforded to each pupil. Yet he voluntarily remarked that there was no loss, but great gain, from having so much room. The ease and freedom with which the varied duties of the school can be performed where ample space is allowed, and the consequent increase of progress in science, will more than compensate for the additional expense, were health out of the question.\*

In regard to the *expense* of erecting separate desks, I am most decidedly of opinion that the amount of time saved by it, will be more than a sufficient compensation. Any thing which saves *time*, saves *money*; and I think time enough would be saved in three years by single desks, to amount, at the lowest possible estimate, to \$100, including food, clothing, and tuition—for these are properly included in the estimate.

\* From a statement of Dr. Bache, quoted by the Journal of Health, Vol. II. No. 6, it appears that each of the cells for solitary confinement, in the new Penitentiary at Philadelphia, contains more than 1300 cubic feet of space; which is equal to a room 14 feet long, by 12 wide, and nearly 8 high. I am acquainted with several school-rooms smaller than this, and without ventilation; while in the *cells* alluded to, the most thorough attention is paid to ventilation, cleanliness, and temperature. The prisoner is also allowed an amount of exercise in the open air, when the weather is favorable, almost equal to that which is allowed to the pupils in many of our schools. In one instance, the amount of space to each *school-room* prisoner, is less than 36 cubic feet, while the adult convict in the penitentiary is allowed more than 1300! Much complaint has been made of the danger of life and health from confinement in these cells; but how seldom do we hear the voice of remonstrance against contracted school-rooms!

The saving need be but fifteen minutes a day to each of fifty pupils. Let him who has had experience in the business of instruction say whether more than even this amount of time is not lost, by the present arrangement of a majority of existing school-rooms. My purpose has been to keep economy in view, in every suggestion. Separate desks for each pupil I regard as absolutely indispensable. As to the increase of size which they give to the school-room, it should be remarked that the purposes of health cannot possibly be answered without an amount of space at least *as great* as I have proposed, whether we use single desks or not.

The *height of the windows* may be objected to by some. But the reasons for this innovation upon the prevailing custom have been fully given; and though it may be regarded as a violation of good taste, the numerous advantages which this arrangement will secure, vastly outweigh every other consideration.

Should it be said, that *the room thus constructed, cannot be used with so much convenience for meetings or for other purposes*,—my reply is, that it was not *designed* for other purposes, but for a *school-room*. If it can be used for meetings and other purposes without injury, so much the better; but nothing should be permitted to interfere with its primary object. Even recreations should not be permitted here. If storms or inclement weather absolutely forbid going into the playground, or if there be no roof thrown over any part of it, the division intended primarily for recitation, near the stove and entries, may be occupied for this purpose, but not the main room.

Finally, it may be said that *classes cannot be formed with so much ease and despatch, on the present, as on the old plan*. Did my limits permit, I think I could easily show that this objection is entirely without weight. Not only can classes be formed in their seats, almost instantly, but by moving only a single step, they find themselves in the spaces or aisles, ready

to march in a row to any place designated,—to the instructor's platform, the black boards, or the play-ground. In fact, the very construction of the desks, places the pupils in right lines, and almost compels them to maintain that position. Each pupil is situated about three feet from his neighbors, at the right and left, and separated by the whole width of a desk from those who sit next to him in the other direction. Of course, it will be rather difficult for one to communicate freely with another; at least without the knowledge of the instructor. At present, it is not uncommon to see half a dozen heads huddled together. They *may* be engaged in study; but they may, too, be doing mischief. How much better is it to prevent evil, by such an arrangement that a vigilant instructor can see the whole school at a single view, and, with a proper degree of care, keep the pupils in the way of duty, than to expose them to unnecessary temptation, and then punish them for offending.

If a room for the special purposes of a museum, and as a place of deposit for apparatus, should be desired, (and it is hoped it may be) the house must be somewhat larger; and this room should be in the rear of the teacher's platform, on the same elevation. For the present, I have supposed shelves, cases, &c., might answer the purpose.

Again—no provision has been made for the pupils standing at higher desks a part of the time, because it is believed they may *sit* without injury for about *half an hour at a time*, and then, instead of standing, they ought to walk into the garden, or exercise in the play-ground a few moments, either with or without attendants or monitors. Sitting too long, at all events, is extremely pernicious; particularly where the desks are too high. This is one principal reason why a large part of our youth have their spine distorted, and the right shoulder higher than the other. For the same reason, and for want of exercise, the muscles which are connected with the spinal column,

are but partially developed, and the whole body, especially the nervous system, is enfeebled.

The relative position of each pupil should occasionally be changed from right to left, otherwise the body may acquire a change of shape by constantly turning or twisting so as to accommodate itself to the light, always coming from a particular window, or in the same general direction.

If a portion of the play-ground is furnished with a roof, the pupils may sometimes be detached by classes, or otherwise, either with or without monitors, to study a short time in the open air, especially in the pleasant season. This is usually as agreeable to them, as it is favorable to health. A few plain seats should be placed there. A flower garden, trees, and shrubs, would furnish many important lessons of instruction. Indeed, I cannot help regarding all these things as *indispensable*, and as consistent with the strictest economy of space, material, and furniture, as a judicious arrangement of the school-room itself.

Sensible objects, and every species of visible apparatus, including, of course, maps, charts, and a globe, are also regarded as indispensably necessary in illustrating the sciences. They not only save books, time, and money, as has been abundantly proved by infant schools, but ideas are in this way more firmly fixed, and longer retained. In the use of books, each child must have his own; but in the use of sensible objects and apparatus, one thing, in the hands of the instructor, will answer the purposes of a large school, and frequently outlast half a dozen books.

Such are the views which my own personal experience and observation have led me to adopt in regard to this important subject. I am aware that on some points they are opposed to prevailing opinions, but while I cannot suppose that they are entirely free from error, I cannot but hope that these and other means proposed for the improvement of our schools will not be rejected without bringing them to the test of a fair experiment.



PLATE I.

FIGURE 1.

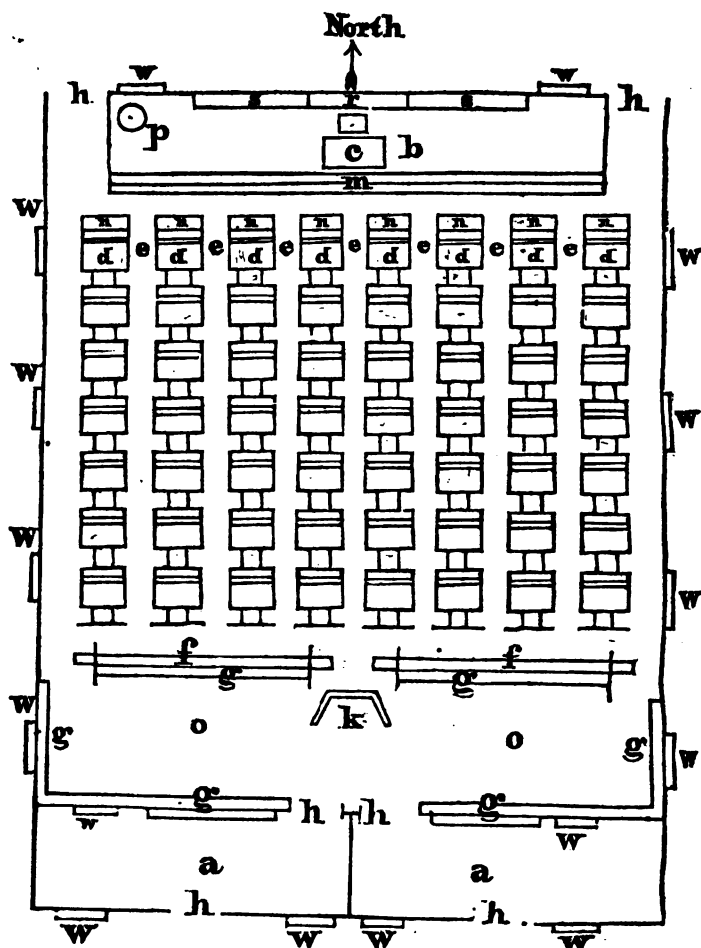
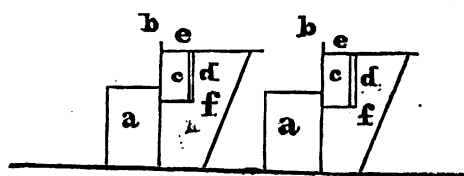


FIGURE 2.



## EXPLANATION OF PLATE I.

FIG. 1. THE PLAN OF THE SCHOOL-HOUSE.

- aa* The two entries.
- b* The Instructor's platform.
- c* Instructor's desk and seat.
- d* Desks, 2 feet by 14 inches.
- e* Spaces between the rows of desks,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide.
- ff* Movable black boards.
- g* Seats, for those who are reciting, &c.
- h* Doors.
- k* Stove.
- m* Step for ascending the platform.
- n* Seats for small pupils, and for recitation.
- o* Space 30 feet by 8, for recitation, &c.
- p* Globe.
- r* Library.
- s* Place of deposit for Museum, &c.
- w* Windows.

FIG. 2. SIDE VIEW OF THE DESKS AND SEATS.

- a* Seat.
- b* Back of the seat, or front of the desk.
- c* Case for books, &c.
- d* Narrow division for slates, &c.
- e* Lid to the book case.
- f* Form of the plank which is the principal support of each end of the desk.



# A P P E N D I X.

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## COMMUNICATION

ON THE

### SIZE AND VENTILATION OF SCHOOL-ROOMS.

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*To the Committee of the American Institute, on the Subject of  
School-Houses.*

GENTLEMEN,

THE *air* we breathe is so common a blessing, that its value is not estimated ; and the importance of preserving its purity in schools, by constructing rooms of sufficient size, and providing ample means of ventilation, cannot be appreciated, without considering the influence which it has upon life, health, and mental vigor. While I shall not attempt to offer an entire plan for a school-room, I have hoped to promote the general object you have in view, by collecting the principal facts in relation to the subject of *air*, which ought to be considered in its construction and arrangements.

The heart of a healthy individual, of mature age, beats about sixty-six times a minute, or four thousand times an hour ; that of a child, much faster. The whole mass of the blood is supposed to pass through it, fourteen times an hour, or once in four minutes. After it returns through the veins to the *heart*, and before it is again sent out into the body, it is made to pass through the *lungs*, where it comes in con-

tact with the air we breathe, and undergoes several important changes.

1. Its *temperature* is raised several degrees. 2. Its *color* is changed, from a dark red to a light crimson—a change which the venous blood will undergo when drawn from the body and placed in the air; and it is found to contain an increased proportion of oxygen, or vital air. The whole mass of blood, thus altered every four minutes, conveys heat and nourishment and life to the extremities of the body; and if the process be interrupted, or imperfectly performed, for four minutes only, every organ and member of the body is of course more or less affected.

These changes *cannot be produced* without the presence of *oxygen*, or vital air; and they are produced in a healthy manner, only, by *such a mixture*, as we find in a pure atmosphere, consisting of 20 per cent. of oxygen, and 80 of nitrogen. If an air *less pure*, or containing other gases, breathed, these changes are not thoroughly produced; the lungs perform their task with difficulty; and the body and the limbs do not receive their *due supplies of nourishment, and vital energy*. They are even *injured* by the *half corrupted state* of the blood; and that weariness and languor are produced, which is always the consequence of spending some time in a bad air. Thus the person, who attends a crowded assembly, where the ventilation is not complete, will find lassitude, and often, chills extending through every limb, and languor invading every faculty of the mind; a feverish, unpleasant taste in the mouth, a restlessness through the following night, and often a degree of exhaustion in the morning, like that which succeeds a night spent in travelling. In order, therefore, to *preserve the body in health*, even after it has gained maturity, and especially to supply it when it is *growing*, and invigorate the constitution when it is forming, it is of the *highest importance* that the air should be preserved in that state of purity which the Creator designed. It is true, that dis-

ease and death do not *immediately* follow every deviation from this standard ; but it is also certain that *some degree of injury must be produced* ; and such a reason for neglect is as insufficient, as it would be to excuse ourselves for giving our friends or our children, food which was partially spoiled, or drink which was partially filthy, because it would not immediately destroy their lives or health. How preposterous and inexcusable would every one regard it, to give them their food constantly mingled with poison, or their drink with pernicious and loathsome insects. Yet it is not less inexcusable to furnish them with *half corrupted air*, or that which contains poisonous gases ! The *food* is given but three times a day ; while the *air* is administered *every moment*. The child is *at liberty* to *receive* or *reject* the food ; but he is forced to breathe the air in which we place him. To put our children or friends in a room, which does not contain that supply of vital air which is necessary for their health, is not only to *offer* them a poison, but to *compel them to take it*. Who can tell how much evil has been ignorantly done in this manner—how much health and enjoyment have been destroyed—how many constitutions have been enfeebled ! The multitude of pale faces and meagre forms to be found on our school benches, and in our colleges, and our manufactories, will answer the question in part.

The following is one fearful example of the effects of negligence on this point. In the Dublin Hospital, during the four years preceding 1785, two thousand nine hundred and forty-four children, out of seven thousand six hundred and fifty, died within a fortnight after their birth ; or thirty-eight out of every hundred. The physician, Dr. Clarke, suspected the cause, and introduced air, by means of pipes six inches in diameter. The consequence was, that during the three years following, only one hundred and sixty-five died out of four thousand two hundred and forty-three, or less than four in a hundred. The fair conclusion, therefore, was, that two thou-

sand six hundred and sixty-five children, of the previous years, died for want of pure air!!" We shudder at the history of the

\* The following statements will show that diseases of the most dangerous character, are often produced by the want of ventilation, where no *immediate* injury is perceived. They are extracted from a work recently published in London, by Dr. George Hawthorn, on the subject of ventilation.

"The contagion by which Typhus Fever is produced," says Dr. Lind, "is generated in three ways; the first of which is the confinement of the *healthy animal exhalations* in a crowded and ill-ventilated place." Mr. Howel, and others, who escaped from the black hole at Calcutta, were seized with the Typhus Fever. Dr. Chisholm, in his observations on the remote causes of fever, says: The second proceeds from *human effluvia*, arising from *healthy persons*, but, from the peculiarity of circumstances in which they are placed, in a state of morbid concentration, are capable of generating a principle similar to that produced by infectious and pestilential effluvia." Dr. Fordyce, and others, state, that many brute animals are subject to Typhus, when crowded together in ill-ventilated places. It has been observed to break out among hogs and sheep.

It is very common to find mild febrile attacks among the poor, apparently originating from cold, or other causes, becoming contagious in their course, in consequence of the confined and dirty situations in which the patients live. "I have known a nervous fever," Dr. Ferrier observes, "which was putrid also in several instances, preserved in a small town for almost two years, among the poor alone." In 1779, a fever of the nervous kind raged in Carlisle England, which did not seem to be introduced from any neighboring place. Dr. Heysham, with great industry, traced its origin to one of the gates, which was tenanted by five or six poor families."

"I conceive it unnecessary to adduce more facts, corroborative of the important truth, that *accumulated and concentrated animal effluvia* are sufficient to produce *diseases of a most malignant and pestilential nature*; or to give more references, to show that such has been the opinion of the *most experienced and learned writers* on the subject. It is a fact, established by the experience of ages, that the most destructive diseases with which our cities and towns have been visited, have generally had their origin either among the poor, whose houses, besides being crowded, are the abodes of all kinds of filth and wretchedness, and destitute of every means of ventilation; or in barracks, poor houses,

"black hole of Calcutta;" but here was a sacrifice of life, eighteen times as great, in an institution of charity!

A man in health, is supposed to breathe, on the average, twenty times in a minute, and to take in forty cubic inches of air at one inspiration; or eight hundred cubic inches, equal to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  gallons per minute. Of this, one fifth only, or one hundred and sixty cubic inches is vital air, or *oxygen*; and thirty-two cubic inches, or one fifth of the whole vital air contained, is consumed in the minute, in order to produce the changes in the blood which are necessary to health. In five minutes, therefore, the vital air of the whole  $3\frac{1}{2}$  gallons would be consumed; or, in *one minute*, the vital air of two-thirds of a gallon. In one hour, the whole vital air of nine thousand six hundred cubic inches, or forty-one gallons, would be destroyed, and respiration could no longer be performed.

But in addition to this, an amount equal, or nearly equal, to that of the oxygen consumed, is produced of *carbonic acid*, formerly called fixed air (which often destroys life in wells); and this *poisonous gas* is breathed in place of vital air. At the end of half the time mentioned, therefore, we shall have an air composed of only half the proper quantity of *oxygen*, and corrupted by an equal quantity of a poisonous gas. In this view of the subject, we can hardly doubt that *double the supply* we have stated, *i. e.* twenty thousand cubic inches, or

hospitals, prisons, ships, *boarding-schools*; or in places which are filled with animal effluvia, from a number of persons being confined or collected together. The necessity, therefore, of changing the air in all such situations, is too obvious to require comment.

A dreadful example of the effects of air thus corrupted, upon individuals who breathe it only a short time, occurred at what were termed the Black Assizes, held at the Old Bailey, in London, 1750. The effluvia arising from a large number of prisoners, who were brought into the Court, or confined temporarily in rooms adjoining it, was so destructive, that more than forty persons present were taken sick and died, including four out of six of the judges, and several of the counsel and jury.



eighty-two gallons per hour, would leave a person to faint and die. Facts confirm this estimate.

Particular experiments were made on this subject by Dr. Henderson and Mr. Kite. Dr. Henderson breathed six hundred cubic inches for four minutes, or nine thousand cubic inches, equal to thirty-six gallons, an hour; and was *compelled to stop*, after suffering much oppression and distress for breath.

Mr. Kite breathed five hundred and ninety-one inches, for a minute; equal to seventeen thousand seven hundred and thirty inches, or one hundred and forty-one gallons per hour, and *was greatly oppressed for breath*. He breathed the same quantity  $1\frac{1}{2}$  minutes, and the oppression became intolerable; and in two minutes use of  $\frac{1}{2}$  gallons of air, (equal to seventy gallons per hour) he became giddy, his face swelled, and he fell back in his chair.

Halley says, that it requires at least one gallon per minute to *sustain life*, or sixty gallons an hour; but this was the air compressed by being in a diving-bell, at the bottom of the sea; and the quantity must be estimated higher at the surface of the earth. *Lavoisier* says, that, according to his experiments, a man would *die* in 5 cubic feet, or eight thousand six hundred and forty inches, in an hour.

It would appear, then, that when a person is *confined* to three hundred cubic inches,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  gallons of air a minute, or to eighteen thousand cubic inches, or seventy-two gallons an hour, he will be in danger of *oppressed breathing, and fainting*. He will not receive the supplies necessary to maintain his vital energies without *much more air*. The question, "How little can be afforded without immediate danger to life?" is one which *should never be asked* by a kind, or even faithful educator, concerning that which God bestows in unlimited abundance, and which can only be excluded by inexcusable parsimony, or cruel neglect towards those under our care. We are not merely bound to *keep children alive*, but to give them all the air which is necessary to *invigorate their constitutions, to produce comfort, and cheerfulness, and activity of*

body and mind. We must therefore resort to the instructions of experience as to this point.

Unfortunately, we have few particular observations in regard to school-rooms.

The French writers on *hospitals*, deem it *indispensable* that each patient, (even in the private sick room of a school) should have  $6\frac{1}{2}$  *cubic toises of air*,—equal to fourteen hundred cubic feet; *and such is the plan of the best European hospitals.* Sir Gilbert Blane says, six hundred cubic feet are necessary in England (with a climate much colder, and an air generally purer than ours) for each patient; and that with a less quantity “*it is impossible to maintain the requisite purity of the air.*” If we take but half the quantity required by the French, (allowing the rest on account of disease) it will probably be a better rule for our climate; and when we recollect the superior means of ventilation in the immense rooms of a hospital (many of which are seventy feet long and fourteen high) this will *by no means be too much* for a small, close, school-room. We shall then have a space of *seven hundred cubic feet* for each pupil;—or, supposing the room to be eight feet high, each child should have *eighty-seven square feet*, or a space of 8 feet by 11. It appears from the facts collected by Mr. Adams,\* that the smallest allowance, in several distinguished schools which he visited, was  $7\frac{1}{4}$  feet; and the largest, sixteen to a scholar; or, if the room were ten feet high, (as we believe those referred to are,) *seventy-two to one hundred and sixty cubic feet.* Lancaster, whose rooms in England were 15 or 20 feet high, in many cases allowed nine square feet to a pupil, or from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and eighty cubic feet to each; and this where the most rigid economy was demanded. Supposing the ceiling to be ten feet high,—at only the allowance of one hundred and fifty cubic feet to

\* See Adams' Lecture, in the collection of Lectures delivered before the American Institute in 1830.

an individual, the *smallest* dimensions of a room for thirty pupils should be 22 feet by 20 feet;—of one for fifty pupils, 30 by 25—for seventy pupils, 35 by 30—and for one hundred—44 by 34 feet. A *liberal* allowance would require at least *one third more*; and *double the space* is *highly desirable*. But if we reduce the space occupied by each child to *less* than that here allowed, we *hazard his health and constitution*, as well as his immediate comfort, in order to avoid an expense comparatively of no moment. And *with this amount of space*, nothing but *frequent and careful ventilation*, and great attention to cleanliness, in the persons of the pupils as well as in the room, will prevent their suffering from the constant exhalations, (often loaded with disease) which arise from the skin, the stomach, and the lungs, and which cannot be weighed and measured, except by the baneful effects they sometimes produce, when they are suffered to accumulate. These *exhalations*, let it be remembered, are *thrown off* by the organs, *because they are injurious to the person himself*. But without due ventilation they must be *respired by others*; and not only that, they are mingled with the saliva in the mouth, and *pass with it into the stomach*. Who can wonder at the loss of appetite, and diseases of the lungs and stomach, which are so commonly connected with ill-ventilated school-rooms! Such places are literally nurseries of disease, and open sepulchres for health and happiness.

In regard to the mode of ventilating school-rooms, it should be remembered, that the gases and exhalations in a crowded assembly are of two kinds—those which ascend on account of their heat or lightness to the upper part of the room, and are perceived by those who sit in elevated galleries, or whose heads are in any way raised towards the ceiling—and the *carbonic acid* or fixed air, which is heavier than the atmosphere, and therefore descends, and occupies that part of the room next the floor, in the same manner as it is found to settle in

wells and cellars. To favor the escape of the lighter exhalations, it is indispensable to have openings over the tops of the windows, or in the upper part of the room; and scarcely any degree of ventilation below will supply their place.\*—In the winter season, an opening into the upper part of the chimney, when the draft is good, will answer the purpose. Where this is wanting, and especially in rooms where lights are used, a very excellent means of ventilation is found in an artificial chimney, formed by a pipe issuing from the upper part of the room, with a large funnel at the opening, in which a lamp is kept burning. By means of the strong draft here produced, Sir Humphrey Davy, the celebrated English chemist, cleared his laboratory in a very short time, after having filled it with noxious gases.

But it is not less necessary to guard against the effects of the *carbonic acid* which settles in the lower part of the room. In caverns and wells, it often rises only to a certain height; so that above this level an individual may breathe and a light may burn, perfectly well; while a light would be extinguished and the respiration obstructed, or stopped, on descending below it. Thus, in the celebrated *Grotto del Cane*, in Italy, in which this gas issues from the ground, and although it is invisible, can be found by its effects to flow along the ground, a dog will die, while a man whose mouth is elevated above the level of the gas, suffers no inconvenience. The teacher, therefore, especially if he is elevated on a platform, will not always

\* I presume many have noticed a fact illustrating this remark, which I have more than once observed in travelling; that when a room which has been closed during the day in warm weather, is aired at night by windows opening only from below, the air will appear for a short time quite fresh; but on shutting the windows, will become, in half an hour, as close as ever. In this case, the warm exhalations and lighter gases remained undisturbed at the top of the room; and as soon as the lower air, which has been cooled, becomes heated, and ascends, they are again brought down, and made perceptible.

be sure that the air of that part of the room in which the smaller children are breathing is good, merely because he perceives no want of purity in that which surrounds him; and, like the man in the Grotto, may be surprised to find that one who breathes below him suffers from the badness of the air. On this account it is of great importance that no part of the room should be below the level of the doors; and that regular provision should be made for opening the doors frequently and for a sufficient time, to allow this deleterious gas to flow off. These circumstances seem to me very decisive arguments against making a school-room descend, as I have sometimes seen, towards the centre, producing a kind of "black hole" for the smaller children; and they show the importance of employing rooms above the level of the ground, for schools, as well as other assemblies of people. The immediate evil effects are imperceptible perhaps; but seeds of disease and debility may be planted, which no subsequent care can eradicate.

The best mode of securing regular ventilation as well as uniform heat in a school-room, during the season when the windows must be closed, undoubtedly is, to introduce the external air from the side, and not from the cellar, of the building, through a stove or furnace, so that it may enter the room warm, diffuse the heat equally throughout, and prevent the current of cold air which presses in at every crevice. In this way also, the doors and windows may be opened at any time, without cooling the room too much, as the air usually presses outward.\*

\* Several excellent plans have been discovered for this purpose, of which I trust the Committee will furnish some account. I have found, that a common stove might be made to answer the same purpose, in some degree, in the following way:—Let a close case of sheet-iron be made of such dimensions as to rise from the floor to the top of the stove, or a little above it, on three sides; and so large that there will be a space of two inches on all sides between the stove and the case. The stove should be raised on legs, or bricks, a few inches from the

The facts and principles presented in this paper, have been collected with care, from the best and most recent authorities in Chemistry and Physiology within my reach ; \* in the hope that they might serve to impress more deeply on the minds of parents, and of the guardians and visitors of our schools, the importance of providing the indispensable means of bodily health and intellectual vigor, *for teachers and their pupils*. It can scarcely admit of a doubt, that the premature decay, or sudden destruction of many a faithful teacher, and the debility of constitution of many a pupil, is brought on by the insidious but poisonous influence of the corrupt air in which they spend their days. The economy, which hazards such results, by providing small school-rooms, can only be compared to that infatuated avarice, *which destroys life, in striving to obtain or to hoard the means of existence*. In no single mode, probably, could the American Institute be more useful, than in establishing and circulating correct views on this important subject ; and I cannot but hope that their efforts will be the means of extensive good, on this and many other subjects of vital importance to the interests of education, and therefore, to the prosperity of our country.

I am, Gentlemen,

Respectfully yours,

WILLIAM C. WOODBRIDGE.

floor, and the opening beneath closed in front with brick—the other three sides being closed by the case. Introduce the air from without, by a wooden trough, and let it rise under the bottom of the stove, and it will pass out between the stove and its case in a pleasant state of warmth. The trough should be furnished with a slide, to regulate the amount of air, according to the warmth of the stove and of the room ; and the case should be so constructed that it may be removed, in order to clean the space around the stove when necessary.

\* Among these are Hare's, Gorham's, Henry's, and Silliman's Chemistry ; Richerand's, Magendie's, and Bostock's Physiology ; Londe's Hygiene ; The Paris Dictionary of Medical Sciences, and Rees' Cyclopaedia.

ON THE  
CONSTRUCTION  
OF  
SCHOOL-ROOMS.

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[The Censors have been favored with a communication "*On the Construction of School-Rooms*," from the Rev. WILLIAM WOODBRIDGE, which was not offered for the prize of the Institute. On this subject, Mr. Woodbridge speaks with the voice of experience; and the following extracts from his communication, contain an exposition of *principles* which are well worthy of attention. The Censors would not be understood, however, to approve of the *plan* proposed in this communication, in all its details.]

THE subject proposed by the Institute, requires attention to the best modes of constructing, warming, lighting, and airing school-rooms. The construction of a room necessarily depends on the objects to which it is destined, and the ends to be obtained; and these must first be considered. No man *ought* to build, without counting the cost: *viz.*—*For what purpose* he builds as well as *at what expense*; whether of *money*, or *TIME, HEALTH, OR LIFE*. What millions have been wasted for want of the first! What losses follow miscalculations in the last.

Before stating any particular plan, I would make some general, but essential remarks.

1. The intent of all theoretical and practical education is, to form *the sound mind in the sound body*. This is the central point to which all means are to be directed. How are the powers of genius to be developed in a *sickly* child? What are the *public uses* of theology, in a dyspeptic divine? or the energies of wisdom in a consumptive habit?—in a walking corpse? *Health* then, and *wisdom*, are the great objects of education: "*United they flourish—divided they die.*" For this the church—the nation—is in mourning.

2. *Fresh air*, and *cleanliness* in every form, are absolutely and imperiously essential in our common schools.

3. Clear light, easy and convenient seats and benches, that favor easy attitudes of body, appear to be important, if not essential points in the structure of school-rooms. *Uneasy bodies* render the mind uneasy and restless. Clear images of truth cannot be reflected from turbid and agitated water.

4. To *prevent* is easier than to *rectify* disorders in a school. In order to do this, no scholar should be out of his teacher's eye five minutes in a day.

Such vigilance is essential to order; as it convinces the scholar that nothing can be done, even slyly, without detection, nor can study be neglected without notice: it is a first principle in the teacher's art, the first in school tactics. Therefore every school-room ought to be so constructed as to render this great and incessant duty convenient.

5. The "*non-naturals*," to use the Physician's term, have great effect upon the *mental temper*, as well as the physical system. A village fiddler takes great care of his violin, keeps it carefully from wet and dampness and too much heat, which affect the tone of its strings, and render them too tense or too lax; surely then the nervous and muscular system requires attention. *Mental habits* are formed under the hand of the teacher. Passions are to be regulated into proper discipline, for self-command, and social order, and regular sub-



jection. *Nothing* that belongs to the means of their regulation is trifling.

"Just as the *twig is bent*, the tree's inclined."

The distorted sapling is low, unshapely, and crooked, while the well trained tree, which is near it, grows tall and upright.

#### LIGHT.

Windows for a school-room ought to be high, for several reasons. 1. When low, the light is interrupted by every intervening object, and throws the pages of the reading and writing book into the shade. 2. Low windows when opened bring a current of air directly upon the pupils, and expose those before it. 3. Low windows incline the scholar to look out too long and too often. The *upper sash* of every public room ought to be hung with a weight, that it may be let down in order to allow the hot and lighter exhalations, which rise to the ceiling, to escape. 4. The *saving* of *glass* would be a serious advantage in point of convenience and economy; for low windows are often broken, and often *go a long time unmended*, from the neglect of committees. 5. The same quantity of glass in a sky-light, would produce double the quantity of light. The sky-light might also be so hung as to air the room, often and easily.\* 6. The end or side windows, ought to be high, and their light thrown upon the benches *lengthwise*; otherwise it will admit an inconvenient shade. Every purpose then both of air and light will be best secured by *high windows*, combined with sky-lights where it is practicable, throwing the light lengthwise over the benches, supposing these to be sloping.

\* The glass might be of the kind called bull's eye, that would stand the weather, and be more secure from accidents.

## HEAT.

Heat in a school-room ought to be equally diffused through every part. This can rarely be done without a stove. No seats or benches ought to touch the floor, therefore, to prevent the free circulation of warm air to the feet. Such seats also would interrupt the sweeping, which ought to be done *daily* and *well*. The fire ought to be kindled early in the morning; otherwise children become uneasy and fretful, and nothing goes on well. When the warm air of a stove-heat meets the scholar's cheek, as he enters school, he is at once pleased and easy. On the other hand too great a degree of heat renders the scholars uneasy, listless and fretful, and the teacher more languid.

There ought to be a *thermometer* in *every school-room*, and the heat regulated to fifty-five or sixty degrees. If the preservation and health of the plants of a green-house deserve this care, should it not be used for a school of children? Our feelings often lead us to judge incorrectly of the temperature; and a teacher who is chilled or feverish, may render his scholars uncomfortably hot or cold; by regulating the room according to his own sensation.

When the room is well warmed in the morning, little, if any additional fuel will be necessary until noon. The breath and perspiration of a school, will keep up the temperature of the room until nearly noon, when the heat ought to abate, to prevent too great a change in passing into the cold air. The same regulation should be observed in the afternoon, and especially in the evening school. Stove-heat is far the most economical as well as most equally diffused through a room. It is of little importance in what part the stove stands; but it ought to have a *foot-board*, say six or eight inches high, if the stove be twelve or fifteen inches from the floor; and six inches wide, to set the feet on, in order to dry and warm them, and at a *safe distance* from the stove. To set with cold or wet feet, for several hours, produces immediate uneasiness,

and often danger. Above this, there ought to be a railing to prevent the children coming too near the sides and top of the stove. An open fire-place is sometimes *dangerous*, and even *fatal*, to children dressed in cotton. I have had two or three grown children whose clothes have taken fire, who were saved with difficulty, from dangerous if not fatal burning. No school-room ought to be left without some careful person, nor the fire renewed without the teacher's direction.

#### AIR.

The quantity of fresh air necessary to life, amounts to more than one gallon for each person for every minute, or seventy-two gallons an hour. So much then must be *ruined* by respiration; and so much *restored by ventilation* every hour. For want of this change of air, attendance upon meetings in a school-house or confined room, soon communicates languor and weariness to a painful degree. Attendance on a crowded assembly is followed by a sleepless or restless night; and a weary day follows from no other cause. How many asthmatic and fatal lung complaints arise from this single cause.

In looking back upon the languor of *fifty years* of labor as a teacher, reiterated with many a weary day, I attribute a great proportion of it to *mephitic air*; nor can I doubt that it has compelled *many worthy and promising teachers* to quit the employment. Neither can I doubt, that it has been *the great cause* of their subsequent sickly habits, and untimely decease. A few, by timely vigilance and care, have prolonged life, until age has given them a fair discharge. It is to be noted that they were *men of temperance*, either from inclination, virtue, or *necessity*—or men of very strong natural constitution. But how shall we prevent the deleterious effects of want of air, which we have described, upon the physical and mental system? From eight to sixteen square feet of area in a school-room have been estimated as necessary to secure a

convenient space for air and the exercise of the school. Why not be liberal of space and air? Parsimony here is "*penny-wise,*" it is *extravagance of health and life.*

#### GENERAL CONSTRUCTION.

In the division of a school-room, I would place the teacher on an elevated platform, eighteen or twenty-four inches above the horizontal floor of the house, from which his eye can easiest view every part. This platform may serve as a stage for speaking and reading select pieces. In front of this platform, on each side of the teacher's desk, should be a board, or desk, ten or twelve inches wide, and conveniently high for a class to rest their books upon when they are receiving lessons, or occasionally to place an idler at, to study. Behind the teacher's platform, ought to be a book-closet, for maps, apparatus, or instruments for school use. A clock that would cost from five to eight dollars, would save its cost every week, besides fixing the habit of punctuality, of diligent study and orderly recitation. *Time is money.* Every minute lost in a school of forty-five scholars amounts to three-fourths of an hour. And all this may be saved several times every day, by the punctuality which a clock produces.

#### DESKS AND BENCHES.

Having tried all kinds of seats and boxes, I prefer those of the Andover and Exeter academies. These consist of seats and boxes twenty-four inches long, fifteen to eighteen wide; sloping one inch, with the lid  $1\frac{1}{2}$  or 2 inches wider than the body of the desk; rising from the seat to the *elbow* of the student. One inch higher might be as well, or even better. The boxes, or desks, may be four or five inches deep next the seat, and six or seven on the other side. The parting of these desks should consist of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch cross-pieces, upon which the lids will rest. The back of each seat will support the box part of the seat behind it. These upright backs will be mor-

liced into two upright plank posts, and these posts into two wide joists, of four or five inches thick. The seats, say ten or twelve inches wide, may be twelve to fourteen or fifteen inches high ; more or less, to suit larger or smaller boys. Between the seat, and its desk, allow only room to stand up. *All seats* ought to have open backs, with narrow boards on the top to rest the back upon.

I have thus given my views in a brief and hasty manner, which circumstances render unavoidable, and request the Institute to dispose of them as they deem best.

(Signed)

WILLIAM WOODBRIDGE.\*

\* The Rev. Mr. Woodbridge is now seventy-five years of age. He was the first principal of the Phillips Exeter Academy. He commenced, in 1780, the only school known for *instructing females in the high branches of knowledge*, was instrumental in forming the earliest *association of teachers* of which we have any account in this country, in 1799—and was for fifty years actively engaged in teaching.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-ROOMS.

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[The following judicious and pertinent hints are extracted from the "School Magazine" for April, 1829. It is hoped they may furnish some useful suggestions to teachers and others who are interested in ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.]

IN the selection of school-rooms in cities, the following things seem highly important : *that the situation chosen be not confined, or dark, or damp, but embrace, as far as possible, the advantages of pure air and free circulation, along with the full privilege of light, and, if possible, a pleasant aspect.* Surrounding objects should, as far as possible, contribute to cheerfulness. This is a principle of great importance in all our arrangements for early education.

Where the advantage of a play-ground can be had, pains should be taken to keep it *dry* ; as it cannot otherwise be wholesome. If a plat, ever so small, can be appropriated for a few shrubs and flowers, or even a single tree, it may be rendered a source of valuable instruction, as well as of immediate enjoyment.

A little care will prevent any injury being done to such a spot, or its productions. In the English infant schools, a bed of shrubs or flowers is sometimes added to the play-ground, for the very purpose of affording opportunity of cultivating early the natural sensibilities of infancy towards the works of creation, and of cherishing in the young mind habits of self-command, and a respect for the rights of property. Mr. Wilderspin, of the infant school in Spitalfields, recommends to all teachers of schools for little children, an arrangement of this sort ; adding the testimony of his experience, that in several

years' teaching of children from indigent and perhaps ill-regulated families, he seldom or never found this expedient for juvenile improvement fail of producing the happiest effects.

To render school-rooms in cities less injurious to the health of young children than they sometimes prove, the following precautions have been found serviceable. *To dispense entirely with close stoves, and to make use of open stoves, or, when possible, of fire-places. To keep a thermometer in the school-room, for the purpose of regulating the temperature, whether in summer or winter. To have one or more of the windows made so as to let down at top.* The raising of windows sometimes throws a strong current on the heads and necks of children, when in a state of exposure from a previously overheated room. At some seasons of the year, this method of ventilating is dangerous, and in all it is injurious. In winter, and especially in the afternoon school hours, great relief from oppressive warmth or closeness, may be obtained by a single pane in the upper part of any of the windows being framed, so as to turn on small hinges, in the manner of a door. A few circular openings in the ceiling serve, in some measure, the same purpose. To secure both of these last mentioned contrivances, would probably be found most desirable.

With these brief hints we must leave the subject of school-rooms in relation to the circumstances of a city, and proceed to the consideration of arrangements applicable to elementary schools in the *country*. We may be permitted, in the first place, a few remarks on the choice of situations for the erection of school-houses. The selection of the spot on which the building stands, is too often made, in New England, at least, with mere reference to a location precisely central for the population of the district. A little attention to the wants and comforts of the children, if substituted for the views and wishes of grown people, would lead to a choice very different from what is sometimes made.

How often may the passing traveller observe, whether in the severity of winter, or the scorching heat of summer, the district school-house exposed in an angle of a bare field, to the violence of the wind, or the heat of the sun, when, at the distance of a hundred rods, might be found the shelter of an adjacent eminence, or the shade of an inviting grove. Were parents, in all cases when the site of the school-house is in agitation, to think of their children's happiness rather than their own predilections, the right decision would be always made; and the building would be erected where *education*, (and not *local feeling*,) required it to be.

The free scope for exercise commonly enjoyed by children in the country, renders any arrangement for health less a matter of importance there, than it is in cities. Still, an enlightened regard to the influence of circumstances in education, would lead to endeavor for securing every possible advantage, whether of a moral or a physical nature. It is by no means a rare circumstance, that the school-house is so situated as to have no adjoining space for recreation. Children are in consequence of this, sometimes left to find their amusement by playing in the road or in the street. In retired, shady, and pleasant situations, this disadvantage is comparatively slight. In rainy or dusty weather, however, and where young children are of necessity exposed to an oppressive sun, the evils are obvious.

To secure the *safety* of the younger children, without irksome restraint, is also a matter of importance in central situations, and near to roads on which there is much travelling. An appropriate play-ground, besides offering attractions for pursuing recreation in a safe and suitable spot, becomes a source of pleasure as a property and possession,—a thing not without its influence, even in childhood.

Many important considerations might be advanced, in addition to those now offered, on this point. But our present object is to submit hints which may lead to further thought, rather than to attempt a full view of the subject. Besides



there are several useful exercises of an intellectual nature, which may be united with bodily recreation ; and for these purposes an adequate space, and sufficiently retired, by means of a fence or otherwise, is indispensable. This is more particularly the case in regard to those blended forms of amusement and instruction which have been introduced with so salutary an effect in infant schools, and which, with a little exertion, might be afforded to the younger classes of pupils in all primary schools.

Great benefit would often be conferred on health, and a valuable aid would be rendered to cheerfulness and mental activity, by extending the arrangements made for the education of childhood, so far as to furnish opportunities for exercise and recreation in unfavourable weather. *A large shed constructed of the plainest materials, would, in this view, be a very desirable addition to the accommodation, and the innocent and healthful pleasures of children.* In inclement weather, the labors of the teacher would sometimes be lightened by employing such a building as a receptacle for classes whose presence was not, at the moment, required in school ; and whose uneasiness must otherwise be repressed by stern measures, or be left to occasion disturbance and interruption.

The subject of facilities for recreation we must now dismiss, with the single remark, that this is a point of great importance to the whole character of the young. Measures for promoting health are of value in proportion as they are used early, while the frame is susceptible, and every favorable change is effectually seconded by nature. A clear, strong, and ready mind, is inseparably connected with health and activity of body ; and the purity of the young heart is best sustained in those instances in which the laws of the human constitution are attentively observed. The period of childhood offers, moreover, strong inducements for an affectionate care of its welfare, by the simplicity of the means it requires to be used for its advan-

tage. The infant does not ask for multiplied and costly resources ; it solicits, with nature's true eloquence, the privileges of protection and freedom, the cheering light, and the invigorating air, and the use of its limbs,—benefits in regard to which our prevailing views of education have been extremely narrow.

The next topic to which we would invite the attention of our readers is *the plan on which school-houses are usually erected*. Several changes might be advantageously made in this particular. Of those which seem most important one is *the enlarging of the plan of the building*, with a view to prolonging the season of teaching, and conducting the instruction of the elder and the younger classes, during a part of the year, under the same roof. A more liberal allowance of space, than has been customary in the planning of school-houses, would at least afford opportunity for arranging and classing the scholars to better advantage, and for introducing new facilities for instruction in several departments of education.

Few measures, perhaps, for the improvement of popular education would be more effectual, than an arrangement which might afford the requisite facilities for advancing, in an adequate manner, the progress of the elder classes in common schools. The great number of children now usually under the care of the teacher of a winter school, and their very unequal ages and capacity, hinder the improvement of all, by confining and embarrassing the efforts of the instructor. To divide the school, so as to arrange the younger scholars in an elementary department, under the care of a female assistant or of monitors, would be a great step towards a general reformation of instruction.

The additional expense of the salary of an instructress would probably amount, in some cases, to an entire obstacle to such an arrangement. But there are few school districts in which the requisite number of scholars sufficiently advanced in years and in education, could not be found, competent to render a limited but effective assistance, under the eye of a qualified

master. In like manner, where summer schools are very numerous, the instructress, if adequate to the charge, might, by the instruction which she should afford to a female class of the proper age and ability, remunerate them for the assistance they might render, in teaching the younger scholars.

To facilitate any plan of this sort, it would be desirable, in all cases, to have the school-room large enough to admit of the principal and the subordinate instruction going on at the same time, under the personal care and the superintending eye of the teacher.

An improvement of some value in the planning of school-rooms would be gained by having *two doors*, instead of one. In this way, *a separate entrance might be appropriated for scholars of each sex*, or for the younger, and the elder classes.

An improvement in the arrangement of the *windows* of school-rooms would be attained, *by placing them much higher from the floor than is now customary*, and having, if necessary on this account, a higher ceiling. Several advantages would be thus obtained. A large space of wall would be gained, which would admit of a range of maps, or useful tables, of letters, figures, weights, measures, &c., besides pictures illustrative of geography and natural history, such as are now afforded in small and cheap publications adapted to primary schools. But the greatest advantage attained in this way would be a range of 'black board,' round the greater part of the room, for various uses in spelling, ciphering, and any other department of instruction which requires or admits illustration addressed to the eye.

To elevate the windows of school-houses would be attended with two other advantageous consequences. *It would tend to keep the attention of the scholars from being attracted to occurrences and objects out of doors, and in summer would afford opportunity of ventilation, without the disadvantage of throwing the current of air directly on the heads of the children.*

P L A N  
OF A  
VILLAGE SCHOOL-HOUSE.

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It is believed that the leading *principles*, advanced in the Prize Essay, will be generally approved by practical teachers; but there may be those who would prefer a school-room arranged on a *plan* somewhat different from that which the author proposes. The Censors have determined, therefore, as the whole subject was committed to them, to annex to the Essay another plan, which, they hope, will be acceptable to the members of the Institute.

Plate II is the ground-plan of a village school-house, for both sexes, containing eighty separate seats and desks. Additional seats for small children, who may not require *desks*, can be introduced at pleasure, and the teacher can arrange them in such situations as may be most convenient. For this purpose a sufficient number of light, moveable forms should be furnished.

The whole edifice, exclusive of the portico in front,—which may be omitted, if a cheap, rather than a tasteful building is required,—is 58 feet long, and 35 feet wide. The dimensions of the *school-room* allow 21 feet of floor to each of eighty scholars, the passages, teacher's platform, &c. being included. It is believed that this allowance is not too liberal,—is not more than is required for the comfort, health and improvement of

the scholars.\* If we were called upon to name the most prominent defect in the schools of our country,—that which contributes most, directly and indirectly, to retard the progress of public education, and which most loudly calls for a prompt and thorough reform, it would be, the want of spacious and convenient school-houses.

The plan here proposed may be enlarged or diminished, for a greater or less number of scholars, according to the following scale:—For ten scholars, add 4 feet to the length; for sixteen scholars, add 4 feet to the width; for twenty-eight scholars, add 4 feet to both length and width. For a less number of scholars, the length or breadth, or both, may be diminished at the same rate.

In villages and populous neighborhoods, would not the interests of education be promoted, if the children were judiciously classed in a *series of schools*, according to their attainments? There might be one commodious building, containing separate rooms for two, three, or more schools, according to the number of children that could conveniently attend. A regular system of studies for the whole establishment should be determined, and its appropriate part of that system be assigned to each school. Stated examinations should be held; and the scholars should be advanced from the lower to the higher departments, according to their progress in the several studies. To give a unity to the mode of government and teaching, the principal instructor should exercise a general superintendence over all the schools; and the senior pupils might be called upon, from time to time, to assist the teachers in the lower departments. They would thus render useful

\* It may not be amiss to state, that two of the Censors teach large private schools in Boston; and, in their respective schools, they allow, for each of their scholars, about 22 square feet of floor, exclusive of entries, dressing-rooms, recitation-rooms, &c. One of the school-rooms is 16 and the other 18 feet high,—the former giving about 350, and the latter about 400, cubic feet of space, to each scholar.

aid to the school, review their own studies in the best manner, and prepare themselves to engage in the business of teaching, should they wish to do so. In cities and large towns, such a union of successive schools is perfectly practicable; and it cannot be doubted that such an arrangement would be attended with many advantages.

The *school-room*, represented in the plan annexed, is 48 feet long, and 35 feet wide, within the walls.

*The floor of the room should be level, and not an inclined plane.* Nothing is gained by the common mode of finishing school-rooms with inclined floors; and much is lost in symmetry, convenience and comfort. A faithful and active teacher will be about among his scholars, and not confine himself to a fixed seat, however favorably situated for overlooking them.

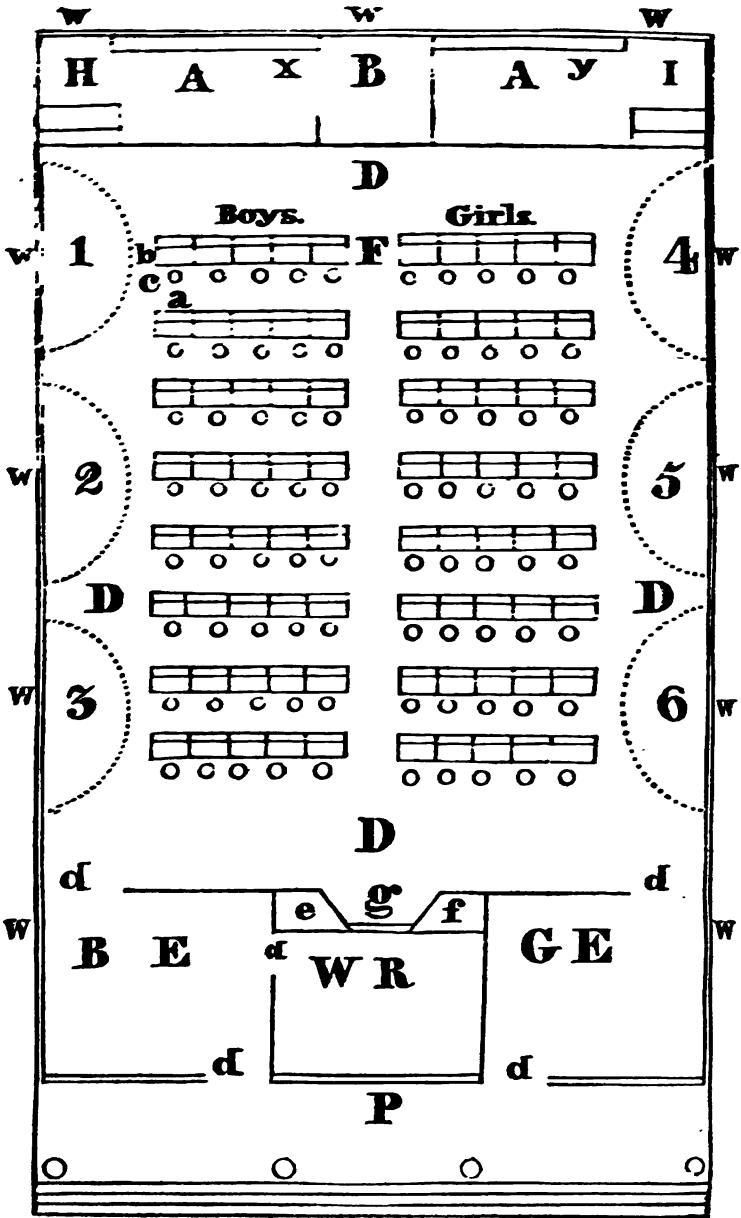
Whether there be a stove in the school-room or not, there ought to be an open fire-place, where children may warm and dry their feet. The fire-place should be furnished with a hot-air chamber, to facilitate the ventilation of the room.

The lids or tops of the scholars' desks are usually made to slope too much. They should be nearly, if not quite horizontal,—an inch to a foot being a sufficient slope.

Each scholar should have a separate seat, which should be confined to the floor. The seat should be about 13 inches square, and furnished with a back not more than 10 or 12 inches high.

The *front* rows of seats and desks, or those nearest the master's platform, being designed for the smaller children, should be lower than those near the entries.

PLATE II.



## EXPLANATION OF PLATE II.

- P* Doric Portico in front of the School-house.
- d, d, d, d, d* Doors.
- B E* Boys' Entry, 12 by 10 feet.
- G E* Girls' Entry, 12 by 10 feet.
- W R* Wood-Room, 11 by 8 feet.
- g* Fire-place.
- c* Closet.
- f* Sink, to be concealed by a falling door balanced with weights.
- D, D, D, D* Passage around the room, 6 feet wide.
- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6* Stations marked on the floor, to be used by classes when reciting to monitors.
- A B A* The Teacher's Platform, extending across the room, 6 feet wide and 9 inches high.
- B* A part of the Platform, to be removed in the winter, if necessary, to make room for a stove.
- x* Cabinet for apparatus, specimens, &c.
- y* Book-case.
- H* Master's Desk.
- I* Assistant or Monitor's Desk.
- F* Centre Passage; in the plan drawn 3 feet wide, but 4 feet would be better.
- b* Scholars' Desks, 18 inches wide and 2 feet long.
- c* Scholars' Seats.
- a* Passages between the seats and the next row of desks, 15 inches wide. A desk, seat, and passage, occupy 4 feet; viz. desk 18 inches, space between the desk and seat 2 inches, seat 13 inches, and passage 15 inches.
- w, w, &c.* Windows, which should be placed high from the floor.

The scale on which Plate II. is drawn, is one tenth of an inch to a foot.





## ACT OF INCORPORATION.

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### COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY-ONE.

An Act to incorporate the American Institute of Instruction.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same,* That Francis Wayland, Jr., William B. Calhoun, William Sullivan, John Adams, John Park, Thomas H. Gallaudet, Andrew Yates, Roberts Vaux, William C. Fowler, Reuben Haines, Gideon F. Thayer, Solomon P. Miles, William C. Woodbridge, Ebenezer Bailey, Abraham Andrews, Otis Everett and James G. Carter, together with their associates, be, and they hereby are made and constituted a Corporation in the city of Boston, by the name of the American Institute of Instruction, with all the powers, rights, duties and liabilities usually incident to Corporations, for the purpose of promoting and improving the means of education and instruction in Morality, Science and Literature.

SECTION 2. *Be it further enacted,* That the said Corporation may appoint such officers, and make such by-laws, rules and regulations, as it may see fit; provided the same be consistent with the Constitution and Laws of this Commonwealth.

SECTION 3. *Be it further enacted,* That said Corporation may hold real estate to the value of ten thousand dollars, and personal estate to the value of twenty thousand dollars, in its

corporate name ; and use and improve the same for the benefit of this Institution, and for all lawful purposes incident to the powers hereby granted.

SECTION 4. *Be it further enacted*, That any persons named in this Act may call the first meeting of the members of this Corporation by public advertisement in any newspaper printed in Boston, two weeks successively before the day of meeting.

SECTION 5. *Be it further enacted*, That this Act shall be subject to be altered, or amended, or repealed at any time, at the will of the Legislature.

In House of Representatives, March 3, 1831.

Passed to be enacted.

WM. B. CALHOUN, Speaker.

In Senate, March 4, 1831.

Passed to be enacted.

SAMUEL LATHROP, President.

March 4, 1831.—Approved.

LEVI LINCOLN.

**CONSTITUTION**  
**OF THE**  
**AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.**

---

**P R E A M B L E .**

WE, whose names are hereunto subjoined, pledging our zealous efforts to promote the cause of popular education, agree to adopt the following Constitution, and to obey the By-Laws made in conformity thereto.

**ARTICLE I.....NAME AND OBJECT.**

The Society shall be known by the title of the **AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION**. Its object shall be the diffusion of useful knowledge in regard to education.

**ARTICLE II.....MEMBERS.**

1. Any gentleman of good moral character, interested in the subject of Education, may become a member of this Institute, by signing this Constitution, and paying, at the time of his admission, a fee of one dollar.\*

2. An annual assessment of one dollar, shall be laid upon each member, by neglecting to pay which, for more than one

\* Members of the Institute may receive their certificates of membership by sending to the Treasurer the annual assessment. Gentlemen residing at a distance, who wish to join the Institute, may do so, by sending to the Treasurer one dollar, and authorizing him to sign their names to the Constitution.

year after due notice from the Treasurer, he shall cease to be a member of the society.

3. Any gentleman, by paying at one time the sum of twenty dollars, shall become a member of the Institute for life, and be exempted from all future assessments.

4. Honorary members may be elected by the Institute, at the recommendation of two thirds of the Directors present at any stated meeting of that Board.

5. For dishonorable or immoral conduct, a member may be dismissed from the society, by a vote of two thirds of the members present, at any regular meeting.

6. Ladies, engaged in the business of instruction, shall be invited to hear the annual address, lectures, and reports of committees on subjects of Education.

#### ARTICLE III.....MEETINGS.

1. The annual meeting of the Institute shall be held at Boston, on the Thursday next preceding the last Wednesday in August, at such place and hour as the Board of Directors shall order.

2. Special meetings may be called by the Directors.

3. Due notice of the meetings of the society shall be given in the public journals.

#### ARTICLE IV.....OFFICERS.

1. The officers of the society shall be a President, Vice Presidents, a Recording Secretary, two Corresponding Secretaries, a Treasurer, three Curators, three Censors, and twelve Counsellors, who shall constitute a Board of Directors.

2. The officers shall be elected annually, in August, by ballot.

#### ARTICLE V.....DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

1. The President, or, in his absence, one of the Vice Presidents, or, in their absence, a President *pro tempore*, shall preside at the meetings of the Institute.

2. The Recording Secretary shall notify all meetings of the society, and of the Board of Directors; and he shall keep a record of their transactions.

3. The Corresponding Secretaries, subject to the order of the Board of Directors, shall be the organs of communication with other societies, and with individuals.

4. The Treasurer shall collect and receive all moneys of the Institute, and shall render an accurate statement of all his receipts and payments, annually, and whenever called upon by the Board of Directors; to whom he shall give such bonds for the faithful performance of his duty, as they shall require. He shall make no payment except by their order.

5. To the Board of Directors shall be entrusted the general interests of the society, with authority to devise and carry into execution such measures as may promote its objects. It shall be their duty to appoint some suitable person to deliver an address before the Institute, at their annual meeting; to select competent persons to serve on Standing Committees, or to deliver lectures, on such subjects relating to education as they may deem expedient and useful; to collect such facts, as may promote the general objects of the society; and to provide convenient accommodations for the meetings. They shall, at the annual meeting, exhibit their records, and report to the Institute. They shall have power to fill all vacancies in their Board, from members of the society, and make By-Laws for its government.

6. It shall be the particular duty of the Curators to select books, and to take charge of the library of the Institute.

7. The Censors shall have authority to procure for publication the annual address and lectures. It shall be their duty to examine the annual reports of the Standing Committees, and all other communications made to the society; and to publish such of them, as, in their estimation, may tend to throw light on the subject of education, and aid the faithful instructor in the discharge of his duty.

8. It shall be the duty of the President, the Vice Presidents, and Counsellors, severally, to recommend to the consideration of the Board of Directors such subjects of inquiry, as, in their opinion, may best advance the great objects of the Institute.

9. Stated meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at Boston on the first Wednesday in January; on the last Wednesday in May; and on the day next preceding that of the annual meeting of the Institute in August.

#### ARTICLE VI.....BY-LAWS AND AMENDMENTS.

1. By-Laws, not repugnant to this Constitution, may be adopted at any regular meeting.

2. This Constitution may be altered or amended, by a vote of two thirds of the members present at the annual meeting, provided two thirds of the Directors, present at a stated meeting, shall agree to recommend the proposed alteration or amendment.

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### BY - LAWS .

I. At all meetings of the Board of Directors, seven members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum to do business.

II. The Board of Directors shall annually choose a Committee of Finance, whose duty it shall be to audit the accounts of the Treasurer, and, under the control of the Board of Directors, to draw orders on the Treasurer for the payment of charges against the Institute.

III. It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary, on application of any two Directors, to call special meetings of the Board.

**OFFICERS**  
**OF THE**  
**AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.**

---

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**BENJAMIN ABBOT**, Exeter, New Hampshire.

**WILLIAM WIRT**, Baltimore, Maryland.

\* Deceased.



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